ROTHELAN

A ROMANCE OF

THE ENGLISH HISTORIES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

ANNALS OF THE PARISH, RINGAN GILHAIZE,
THE SPAEWIFE, &c.

Some people would impose now with authority
Turpin's or Monmouth Geoffrey's Chronicle.

LORD BYRON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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ROTHELAN.

PART VI.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PLAGUE.

And they pass'd, and they pass'd,—
   Seven all in a row;—
There was father and mother, and children five,
   One grave got them all,—a grave in the snow:
And the blast blew still, and the drift did drive.

DEATH HIS GARLAND.

AFTER the account of the manner in which the great plague, in Edward the Third's time, was introduced into England, the Chronicler suspends his narrative, both of the public transactions and of the story of Rothelan, to

describe the ravages of that extraordinary pestilence.

"In its malignancy," he says, "it engrossed the ill of all other maladies, and made doctors despicable. Of a potency equal to death, it possessed itself of all his armouries, and was itself the death of every other mortal distemper. The touch, yea, the very sight of the infected, was deadly; and its signs were so sudden, that families seated in happiness at their meals have seen the plague-spot begin to redden, and have wildly scattered themselves for ever. The cement of society was dissolved by it. Mothers, when they saw the sign of the infection on the babes at their bosom, cast them from them with abhorrence. Wild places were sought for shelter;—some went into ships, and anchored themselves afar off on the waters. But the angel that was pouring the vial had a foot on the sea as well as on the dry land. No place was so wild that the plague did not

visit,—none so secret that the quick-sighted pestilence did not discover,—none could fly that it did not overtake.

"It was as if Heaven had repented the making of mankind, and was shovelling them all into the sepulchre. Justice was forgotten, and her courts deserted. The terrified jailers fled from the felons that were in fetters;—the innocent and the guilty leagued themselves together, and kept within their prisons for safety;—the grass grew in the market-places;—the cattle went moaning up and down the fields, wondering what had become of their keepers;—the rooks and the ravens came into the towns, and built their nests in the mute belfries;—silence was universal, save when some infected wretch was seen clamouring at a window.

"For a time all commerce was in coffins and shrouds; but even that ended. Shrift there was none;—churches and chapels were open, but neither priest nor penitent entered;

all went to the charnel-house. The sexton and the physician were cast into the same deep and wide grave;—the testator and his heirs and executors were hurled from the same cart into the same hole together. Fires became extinguished, as if its element too had expired;—the seams of the sailorless ships yawned to the sun. Though doors were open, and coffers unwatched, there was no theft;—all offences ceased, and no crime but the universal woe of the pestilence was heard of among men. The wells overflowed, and the conduits ran to waste;—the dogs banded themselves together, having lost their masters, and ran howling over all the land;—horses perished of famine in their stalls;—old friends but looked at one another when they met, keeping themselves far aloof;—creditors claimed no debts, and courtiers performed their promises;—little children went wandering up and down, and numbers were seen dead in all corners. Nor was it only in England

that the plague so raged; it travelled over a third part of the whole earth, like the shadow of an eclipse, as if some dreadful thing had been interposed between the world and the sun-source of life.'

The good Lady de Crosby died, the gentle Beatrice died, and Sir Amias, followed at a distance by Ralph Hanslap, went murmuring every where in quest of the infection, but he could not die.

He confessed aloud, to every one he met, the wrongs he had done to the widow and the orphan, but no one heeded his tale; for all were flying, they knew not whither, from the pestilence.

He ran to the house of Adonijah the Jew to make restitution. The door was open, and he rushed in; but a swarm of horrible flies came buzzing into his face, and he heard the sound of swine grovelling in the darkness within.

He turned slowly round, and seeing Ralph

Hanslap standing in the street, he beckoned him towards him, but was refused. He darted back in his frenzy into the house; and the cries of the swine, driven from their devouring, were heard, and two that were black came raging out.

At that epoch, for a short time there was a silence, and every person in the street for a moment stood still; and London was as dumb as a church-yard. Again the sound of a bell was heard; for it was that sound, so long unheard, which arrested the fugitive multitude, and caused their silence. At the third toll an universal shout arose, as when a herald proclaims the tidings of a great battle won, and then there was a second silence.

The people fell on their knees, and with anthems of thankfulness rejoiced in the dismal sound of that tolling death-bell; for it was a signal of the plague being so abated that men might again mourn for friends, and hallow their remains with the solemnities of burial.

Sir Amias de Crosby had heard the tolling and shouting, and came out from his dreadful search. "Thank Heaven," he said, "none of them are here;—there are but three bodies within, Hanslap,—old Shebak, a woman, and another man, whom, I think, was the son of Adonijah; but, perhaps, the rest are all dead."

"O sir, would you be pleasured to lend me a helping hand for Christianity?" cried an aged matron, at that moment, to the squire from the door of a neighbouring house, as she was attempting to drag out a large chest.

"What have you there? Let it alone," cried Ralph Hanslap, who recognised in her the lady of Sir Gabriel de Glowr, with whom, before the pestilence, he had formed some acquaintance; and he added, "'Tis a sin to think of such a thing at this time. Where is Sir Gabriel?"

"He's won awa after a sore struggle," replied the lady.

"And why did not you go with him?"

"It was na my allowance—my time was na come, and it was a mercy I was spar't to attend him; for, oh! he had sore trouble; but he was a thought fashious in the dead throes. Noo I beg and beseech you, Maister Hanslap, to help me."

"What would you?"

"Put him aneath the grund!—put him aneath the grund!" exclaimed the lady, bursting into tears, but adding more calmly, "for though he was na without a fault, he was aye my friend." Her tears beginning to flow faster, she sat down on the chest and began to weep bitterly, saying, "but it's weel for him and it's woe for me. He's now getting his reward, weel happit in Abrahawm's bosom; but I maun dree my leafu' lane in a foreign land."

"But your servant, what's become of him?" cried Ralph Hanslap, really touched with compassion for her forlorn situation.

"He's dead too—but he could be spare't."

While they were thus speaking, one of the huge waggons that were employed to carry the dead to the great public pits, was seen coming towards them, and two fellows before it, crying, "Bring out your dead."

"These men," said Ralph Hanslap, moving to retire as the tainted waggon drew near, "will assist you to bring out the body."

"Would I gi'e my gudeman to them?" exclaimed the lady, rising in horror at the thought of committing the remains of Sir Gabriel into the common stock—and she added—

"Would ye serve one of the Fa'side family like a malefactor? No, no—I have been his wife for forty years e'er to alloo o' that. Wi' a fire-sho'el I hae howkit a grave for him in the next kirk-yard, and though I couldna get a coffin made, this kist maun serve in such a needcessitous time."

"That chest!" exclaimed Ralph Hanslap.

"Deed ay, I squeezht him in't, knees to

chin, wi' my own hands,—for wha was there to help me ?—and I ha'e lockit the lid down, never to be opened till the last day. O! Mr Hanslap, if you wad but help me wi't out o' the house, I could harl't to the grave mysel'."

"I'll help you, and I'll help to carry it too, for the pestilence has no power over me," cried Sir Amias, rushing to her assistance; and with his aid she got it removed and taken to the church-yard, Ralph Hanslap following them.

When they had completed the interment, she sat down on one of the tomb-stones, and began again to weep and mourn.

Contrasting the difference between that forlorn ceremony and the revelries of their wedding-day.—"Ah! he was blither then," said she, "and he could sing the Border lilts like a laverock. Weel do I mind how he sang,

"Carlin, is your daughter ready,
Fey make her ready,
At the door there stands a jo,
And he'll———"

"Gude forgi'e me, am I singing at my gudeman's burial?"

It was, however, the poor lady's last song; the infection had seized her, and the delirium was coming on. In the course of little more than an hour, she died in the church-yard, and Sir Amias de Crosby dug the fresh mould from the new-made grave, and laid her by the side of her husband, whose obsequies she had so affectionately performed.

"This," says the Chronicler, "was thought to be the last of the wonderful and dismal things done in that time; for, from the hour that the mort-bell was again heard in the land, men relapsed into their wonted customs, and the emulations of pride and vocation became as common as before."

CHAPTER II.

SURVIVORS.

It is the same—I thought the old man dead.
How hath he fared?—but I will speak to him.

A PLAY.

WHEN "the year of the prodigies and the pestilence," as it is called by the Chronicler, was over, and the currents of human affairs had returned into their ancient courses, it appears, that one day, as the Bishop of Winchester was sitting in his chamber, it was announced to him that Adonijah the Jew solicited an audience. The name of the old man, for now he was become very aged, reminded him of the story of Rothelan, which, having heard nothing of for a long time, he had forgotten in the nearer cares by which he

was himself afflicted during the great calamity. Curious to know what had happened, and in what manner that perplexed business had been unravelled—if it had been—he ordered Adonijah to be admitted.

"I come," said the Jew, bowing and shuffling with his slippered feet as he advanced, leaning on a staff; "I come to make you many compliments for your humanities to the desolate lady, and to say, that the rich casket of precious gems, which was lodged with you to help the testimonies of Providence, hath now become of your own properties."

"I thought they were the lady's; did you not tell me so?" replied the bishop.

"And I told you truths,—I have told you nothing but truths."

"How then may I from you accept of such a gift without her consent?"

"She hath no need of them," replied Adonijah with a sigh.

"Is she dead? Has she too died in the pestilence?"

"No; she lives, and her son lives; but her fair fame, which was her only jewel, it hath died in the pestilence."

"What do you mean, good man?" said the bishop compassionately; for he was touched with pity by the tender and penetrating accent of the mournful Adonijah.

"All that could have come with their testimonies to make her bright from the blemish of that Sir Amias de Crosby—they are all dead. I have made many searches, but death is the answer to all. I have sent out even gold to make a search, and, like the raven of Noah, it hath found but carcasses."

The humane prelate was profoundly affected by the earnest and peculiar eloquence of Adonijah; and he remained thoughtfully reflecting on the dismal circumstances to which the energetic old man so impressively alluded.

At last he inquired—

"Has Sir Amias de Crosby survived the plague?"

"Yes," replied Adonijah, "he hath been spared. It is a wonderful justice that he hath been spared."

"Then he has restored his nephew, and admitted the lady's claims?"

Adonijah at these words recoiled, exclaiming—"Speak not of such prodigies; were it to be, there would be fears for the remnants of man."

"I beseech you to sit down and tell me your story," said the bishop. "You say that the preservation of Sir Amias is a wonderful instance of justice—what do you mean?"

"Because," replied the old man, folding his hands, and casting his eyes devoutly upwards, "it must be to serve some great purpose of Providence, and Providence is justice. But all human helps and means are extinguished for the poor lady; and therefore it is

that I am come to make the jewels yours, and to say, that from the laws of mortal kings we now seek no redress. Heaven hath evoked the cause to the bar of its own judgment-seat, and we intend to abide the process there."

"You consider the wrong that Sir Amias de Crosby has done with more solemnity than perhaps the circumstances require."

"Do I?" cried Adonijah, as if he intended a rebuke; but recollecting that he was then in the presence of a powerful, though an urbane dignitary of the church, he crouched forward, and said, with much lowliness of voice and manner—

"This cause, though but a very, very tiny peg in men's valuations, hath it not been made the axle whereon terrible things have been charioted over all England?" He then added, somewhat more erectly—"Can the visible courses of nature be changed without the help of moralities, or the courses of moralities

turned aside without the intervention of the visibilities? But I will not speak mysteries; for I do see, as if I could touch, that the wrong done to the forlorn lady will be avenged on that Sir Amias, though all the testimonies of her truth be buried in the sepulchres of forgottenness."

"But perhaps," replied the bishop, "were he now appealed to, he would make restitution."

"He hath withstood the advocacy of the plague, and yet makes no confession," said Adonijah.

"What has he to confess?" interposed the bishop, surprised at the term. "Hitherto he hath been but accused of wrongfully denying the lady's rights; he has said himself, that give him proof, but credible proof, and he will resign every thing."

Adonijah looked firmly at the bishop; observing, however, that the prelate was surprised, he restrained himself, and said—

"I am not a man that hath no charities in his heart. I do not always think ill things of those who have done me wrong; but there is that in the depths and the darkness of Sir Amias de Crosby which makes me to dread that he hath indeed confessions to make. In that lies the great strength of his obduracy. Many now say, that in the pestilence he ran to and fro proclaiming his malefactions. But the pestilence hath ceased, and the omens have passed away, and he is as fair with his affabilities, as the fields are with flowers when the winter is over and gone."

"Then I am to understand," replied the bishop, "that he still refuses to acknowledge he has done the lady any wrong?"

"He is a gracious man," said the Jew, "and he will—O, he is a good man!—he will give all up, if the lady can but prove that she was his brother's wife."

"Is there no evidence to be now obtai ned?"

"None: there is no proof even left that her son is her child; for I am but a Jew, and they say a conspirator."

"What has become of the Lord Mowbray?" cried the bishop, struck with this new character that might be given to the humane part which Adonijah had so long performed.

"He is dead" was the answer.

"And his servants?"

"They are all dead."

"And those who were with the king at Werk-castle when your brother brought the page's dress there?"

"Dead."

"Is the Countess of Salisbury dead?"

"Dead."

"Is your brother dead?"

"Every body is dead!" exclaimed Adonijah with the accent of misery.—"No," he added abruptly, "Sir Amias is not dead. There is a witness in him."

"But, my good old man, it is plain he will make no confession. Are all his servants dead?"

"Let me see, let me see," said Adonijah, as if to recollect himself;—"I have my recollections;—there was a man,—a morose man,—a sullen man,—Ralph Hanslap. He was living on that day when the death-bell bade the world be joyful that the pestilence was going back. If he is yet alive, he may be a certificate and a testimony."

"Was not that the name of the person who stole the child from the lady during the fire at Crosby-house?"

"He did make the child be stolen," replied the Jew.

"It will, I fear, avail but little to the cause of justice," said the bishop, "whether he be alive or dead;—he was entirely devoted to his master, and, I doubt not, hath his interest in't."

"He is not a man of interests," replied

Adonijah; "I have known that man since years that are old;—he hath no covetousness;—he hath no love for Sir Amias."

"How say you?"

"He is bound to him by wonder and amaze, and, it may be, by revenge."

"What mean you, my good old man, by wonder and amaze?—I have heard that he has been long in the service of Sir Amias; and now I do recollect that the knight himself, before the king and council, described him rather as a friend than a servant.

"He does not know him. Have I not watched his eye and his voice, and seen him look scorn and speak bitterness seemingly of his habitudes; but he had some thought in his bosom that made him curious;—his taunts were said to search, not to wound,—and so they did never offend."

"You involve all this business in an awful vapour, making what seemed but at the

most a cruel fraud, appear like the phantasma of some dreadful crime. But how is it that you have never before thought of this Ralph Hanslap?" said the bishop, and he seemed as if he was pleased with his own reflections in making the remark.

"It hath been of Providence," replied Adonijah thoughtfully. "I could not else have forgotten that man, nor could the lady, too, have forgotten him. It has been the will of Heaven that we should forget him; and if he is now alive, he too hath been spared for a purpose;—I begin to tremble at the forerunners of the justice that is coming."

"You will do well, my good man," said the bishop, "to inquire how this may be, and let me know the result. If the man is still alive, he shall be brought here, and I will examine him myself."

At these words Adonijah rose from his

seat, and moving backward from the presence of the prelate, folded his hands on his bosom, and reverentially retired.

CHAPTER III.

A SONG.

Are there not moments when the breathing spirit
Doth take the voice of music, and expresses
Its sadness with an eloquence that uses
Not words, but gentle sounds?

PRITCHARD'S COURTIER.

ALTHOUGH there is an unquestionable difference between our Chronicler and those who have recorded, with equal consideration, the birth of a calf with two heads and the fate of a regicide, yet he has some faults in common with them; inasmuch as his work is arranged chronologically, and has but little regard to the epic continuity and development of incidents; so that whatever of the sort is found in this work, is all to be ascribed to the merits of the compiler. We are led to make this remark, in consequence of not being

able to discover what happened to the Lady Albertina and Rothelan during the pestilence, further than that we are led to infer they resided in the country, though as to the particular place we have no direction. For, after the interview described in the preceding chapter between the Jew and the bishop, the Chronicler mentions, that during the absence of Adonijah on that occasion in London, the lady and her son were conversing of their fortunes on a bench in the pleasants adjoining their house.

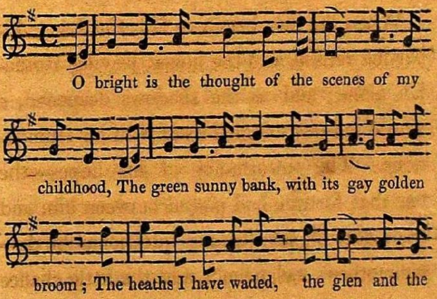
"It was," says he, "in that season when the earth blithely shows her broad apron filled with the gifts of Heaven, and the obsequious trees hold out their hands to the gardener, offering, in reward for his care, all kinds of delicious fruits;— at that opal hour of the evening, when the sun has just retired behind the many-coloured woods, and the jocund hind boy, sitting on the shaft of his wain as he drives it homeward, cheerily mocks the ding

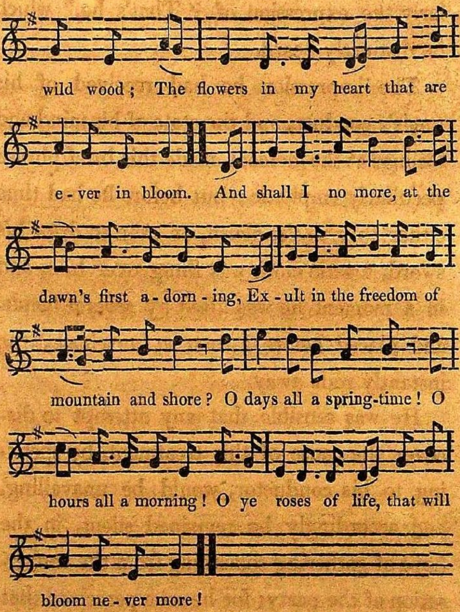
dong of the abbey bells ringing the curfew;—when the tidy grand-dame lays aside her distaff, and is seen with a pitcher slowly tottling across the fields to the dairy of the neighbouring grange;—when the rosy maiden looks often from the door, with her top-knots well set, to see if one that she expects is yet coming;—when the gray-haired gaffers of the village meet in the alehouse nook to discourse of royal councils, and how English honesty is choused by foreign guile, and when, from the river's brink, the garrulous ducks return home more wisely talkative of the things that befit their condition."

When the dew began to fall, the Lady Albertina retired into the house, leaving Rothelan alone; and as the shadows deepened, a gentle sadness mingled itself with his ruminations. The uncertainty of his hopes—the bar that fortune had placed between him and the Lady Blanche in his questioned birth—his mother's melancholy, and the little chance

that was then in the time, of any warlike adventure to give vocation to his ambition, all combined to lead him to think of the past, and to regret that he had ever known so much of his own history. In this musing mood, the images of the haunts where he had spent his youth returned with a generous tenderness upon his memory, and, almost unconscious of giving voice to the sentiment with which he was affected, he began to sing, clothing his thoughts with the following melody:

SONG.





He was on the point of renewing the air, when the sound of two persons, whispering on the outside of the hedge which enclosed the garden, attracted his attention, and particu-

larly the expression of "That's he," which he distinctly heard.

The impression he had received of his uncle's conduct, and the state of his mind and feelings at the moment, made this brief phrase peculiarly emphatic; but before he had time either to give the alarm, or even to draw his sword, a wide cloth was flung over him, and in a moment he was lifted by several hands, and placed before a man on horseback, who instantly rode away.

He was sensible that any attempt to discover the cause of this treatment, by speaking to his conductor, would be unavailing, and accordingly he remained silent, in the hope of gathering something from the conversation of the party; for he soon perceived that there were several in company: but they went on in silence till they reached the brink of the river.

When he heard the rippling of the waters, he expected to be thrown in; but his appre-

hensions in this respect were soon quieted by the sound of a boat approaching, into which he was immediately placed, and conveyed to the opposite shore, where other men and horses were ready to receive him. Without the cloth being removed which had been flung over him, his arms were tied down to his sides, and he was again set on horseback as before.

In that condition he was conveyed several miles, and he heard, by the noise of the horses' hoofs, that he was passing a drawbridge, and under the vaulting of a gateway. In a moment after the reverberation of the trampling convinced him that he was within the area of a wide court; and the horses then stopping, he was lifted from the saddle and carried into a room, where his arms were untied, and the cover in which he was wrapt removed.

"No harm is intended, so make yourself comfortable," said a strong and stern fellow, who, with several others of a similar sullen physiognomy, were standing around him,

while another man in the garb of a domestic placed a light on a table.

"Where am I, and for what am I brought here?" said Rothelan, with a cool and resolute air. "It is plain you do not seek my life; but why am I a prisoner?"

"We have executed our orders," said the same soldier who first spoke, turning to his fellows, who, without making any reply, immediately began to retire.

"I demand again some explanation," exclaimed the prisoner.

"You can get none from us," said the soldier gruffly, "we have but done our duty."

"On whose orders then?"

"It's no part of them to tell you," was the answer; and with these words, the others having in the meantime retired, he also left the room, and closing the door, which opened outwards, fastened it with a chain and bar.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SAND-GLASS TURNED.

Thrice he steppit east the hall,
And thrice he steppet west,
And long and dismal was the sigh
That heaved his loaded breast.
But ne'er in shrift to holy man
Would he his sorrows tell;
And he lived with men companionless
As a hermit in a cell.

SIR EVERARD.

IN the meantime Ralph Hanslap had received a summons to appear before the Bishop of Winchester. It came upon him and his patron the more unexpectedly, as they were both persuaded that the Lady Albertina and her son had, as well as all the witnesses, perished of the plague; but the impression it produced on the one was very different from its effects on the other.

The knight was startled and alarmed; he had begun to compose himself, and to arrange his household for a calm and dignified remainder of life; he had even assumed the humble air of a mourner, lamenting, with all becoming epithets of commendation, his departed lady, and the lovely fragile Beatrice. It is true, that when occasionally reminded by any of his friends of those wild declarations, prompted by remorse and terror, which he had made under the appalling portents of the pestilence, he gradually shaded the expressions of penitence into those of sorrow, that the lady and her son were likewise dead, and removed beyond his power to prove to them the unaffected sincerity of his regard and friendship.

Ralph Hanslap, on the contrary, had become listless; he wanted an aim; there was nothing to interest him; he moved about as it were like a mindless automaton, and his actions appeared to be the random and momen-

tary plunges of impulse, rather than the result of intellectual motives. Yet he nevertheless remained constantly with Sir Amias; there was just enough still in the condition and in the conduct of the knight to keep his curiosity awake; something of which he desired to see the end, sufficiently mysterious and uncertain to preserve the tie of his fidelity and attachment unbroken.

But the bishop's summons was to him like an accession of new life; it quickened him as with the energy of a miracle. His eyes brightened, his brows were again gathered with thought, and the dark, deep, sharp look, with which he was wont to search the very heart's core of those with whom he conversed, especially of Sir Amias, seemed as it were renovated, and made more inquisitive, by the previous lethargy into which he had apparently fallen. It was manifest that it gave him a profound and inspiriting satisfaction.

"I am glad of this," said he to the knight, when he mentioned the subject.

"Glad, Hanslap! you ought rather to wonder what it can mean: think you that any of them are still alive?"

"Any of whom?"

"Those curses of my life. Need you inquire?—I am doomed to be haunted for ever!"

"Perhaps you are," was the cold, slow, withering reply, to an exclamation dictated by torment and uttered with anguish.

Sir Amias walked away with short and quick steps, and Hanslap followed him with his eye, in the evident enjoyment of that pleasure which springs from ardent excitation.

"Then you intend to obey the summons, Hanslap?" said the knight after some time, during which they had both remained silent.

"I do," was the brief reply; but, almost

in the same breath, somewhat abating the strength of his emphasis, the squire added, "Can I refuse? How could I refuse?"

"And what do you mean to say?"

"I! What should I say?"

"He will question you about me."

"I expect so."

"Then you should be prepared to answer him."

"I would, if I knew what his questions will be."

"Surely, Hanslap, you will not desert me. We have been old friends; we are growing old together. I thought we were to continue always friends."

"I know nothing yet to the contrary," was the steady and collected answer.

"Then you will not betray me?"

"Betray!—What is there that I should betray?—You have said the Italian lady was not your brother's wife, and it is certain she was not able to disprove what you said."

"You have served me in all that business with true, steel-trusty fidelity, Hanslap, and I rely upon you; I lean upon your honesty."

"I wish you had a better prop," was the abrupt answer, accompanied with a look that made Sir Amias turn aside from its keen inquisition. "But," added Hanslap, "the time is up, and I must go to the bishop."

"I will go with you."

"Will you indeed?" said the other, with a lively accent of delight, moving at the same time towards the door of the chamber,—but the knight stood still.

"On second thoughts, Hanslap," said he, "it might look odd were I to obtrude myself: it may be a business that does not at all concern me."

"It is possible; but I don't think so."

"Then you advise me to accompany you?"

"I do not advise; but I should be happy

if you did. It is wonderful how long this affair lasts!"

"What affair, Hanslap?"

"This business of the unfortunate foreign lady."

"Unfortunate!—It is her own fault if she is so—I am not the cause of her misfortunes. Had she been ruled by me, she would have met with none. But you know her obstinacy."

"I do."

"Then, can you say that I am to blame?"

"That depends on whether she has spoken truth."

"Hanslap, is it possible that you intend to tell the bishop that you believe she spoke so; that she ought to be credited before me?"

"I tell nothing—*that* you know well, Sir Amias; you have had nearly twenty years experience to satisfy you."

"How twenty years? We have known each other more than forty."

"But since the death of Lord Edmund I

have been as silent as wax. To no man have I spoken without cause, nor to any question, not even to yours, answered more than the occasion required."

"You would insinuate that there was a cause for that too?"

"Is there none, Sir Amias?" and he darted his darkest look at the knight, the colour of his features being in the same moment overcast with a stormy scowl.

Sir Amias was struck; and, for the space of a few seconds, eyed him in his turn with scarcely less eagerness; but there was in it a cast of suspicion, which soon passed into a slight expression of alarm.

"Have I been trusting my fortunes," said he, "in a rotten boat?"

"Will Sir Amias answer me one question?"

"Certainly! Wherefore should I not? All I do is known to you; from you I have no secrets."

"Is that the case, Sir Amias?'

"Well, what is it you would say? What is it that you wish?"

"I have asked the question, and I wait your answer."

"You trifle with me. You should not so trifle, Hanslap. What is that you desire to know?"

"You but just now, Sir Amias, said to me, that you have no secrets concealed from me."

"Well—I did so."

"And I but inquired, and with permission, if that was the case. You have not answered me."

"Really this is too much, Hanslap; I can endure a great deal, but you strain me to the stress."

"I beg your pardon, Sir Amias; but you have not answered the little question which I have repeated."

"Then you do think that I have secrets concealed from you?"

There was a degree of confusion in the

manner with which this was said, and it was increased by the fierce, stern, and almost menacing look, with which Ralph Hanslap regarded him, as he, with an indifferency of accent, far more emphatic than any emphasis could have given, replied—

"But you do not answer my question."

"Why every man has something that he hides from his best friend, Hanslap," said the knight, recovering himself; "and it may be that there are some things which I have probably not conferred with you about."

"I know it, Sir Amias; and there are things too which every man has, that he would hide even from himself."

"I cannot fathom you, Hanslap. You were not always so mystical."

"No, not always; but, Sir Amias, you do not keep your promise. You have not answered my question."

"Do not be pertinacious. Is there any

thing of consequence that you desire to know which you think I conceal from you?"

"There is."

"If you know it, why ask?"

"I do not know it."

"Then you suspect something!—What is it that you suspect?"

"I cannot comprehend why you ever and anon profess a wish to do justice to the Lady Albertina, and as often, when brought to the test, still refuse. There is a cause, Sir Amias, for that; and for those transient fits of—what may I call them without offence?—which sometimes almost master your reason. I have observed you long, Sir Amias, and noted the time when the change began."

"And when did it begin, Hanslap?" inquired the knight in visible apprehension.

"At the death of Lord Edmund. I have not since that day been able to understand you."

"Have I then had a spy upon me? but

why should I stand in awe of any observation?"

"You know best," replied Ralph Hanslap carelessly, and immediately retired to obey the summons.

When he left the room, the knight followed him to the door; but, instead of going out with him, he shut it abruptly and bolted it, that no one might come in. He then threw himself into a chair, and remained for a considerable time in a state of inert and fearful abstraction; not a muscle moved, but he breathed heavily, and the perspiration broke out on his forehead. He then rose, and half unsheathed his sword; something checked his arm, and he drove it home again. He wiped the perspiration from his brow, and ran rather than walked three or four times across the room. He again laid his hand on his sword, but, in the same moment, Ralph Hanslap at the door, announced that the Earl of Lincoln was in the gallery.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEAD ALIVE.

Have I with kindred blood my hand destain'd—
Stabb'd my soul's peace, and from my pillow frighted
Sweet Sleep, save when she comes dogg'd by the fiends
Of hell, making my dreams more horrible
Than e'en my waking thoughts—
To have my glorious purpose thus defeated?

GONZANGA.

THE moment that the knight came out to the Earl of Lincoln in the gallery, that nobleman is described as going eagerly towards him, and saying suddenly—

"I have strange news, Sir Amias,—one Hubert Neville"——

"What of him? what of him?" cried the knight wildly.

The earl paused, and Ralph Hanslap, who

was on the point of retiring to obey the message from the Bishop of Winchester, stopped and looked back. The earl resumed—

"This Hubert Neville is the father of the young fellow who has dared to give us both so much trouble."

"Is he alive?" said Ralph Hanslap, coming close up to the earl, casting, at the same time, one of his keenest heart-searching glances at Sir Amias, who stood trembling like the aspen.

"He is come, I am informed," replied the earl, "to Windsor."

"Come!" echoed Sir Amias.

Ralph Hanslap again looked at him; and again addressing the earl, said—

"And is his master, Lord Edmund, too, alive?"

"It is so reported. They have been both prisoners these eighteen years in a lone islet on some remote and savage coast of Scotland."

"You have known it?" said Ralph Hanslap emphatically to his patron.

"This is judgment!" exclaimed the knight, clasping his hands distractedly.

"Then you did know?" rejoined the earl, thunderstruck at the effect which the news had produced, adding—"Is all then that you have so often told me of the Italian lady and her son false?"

"Yes," replied Ralph Hanslap, "I'll vouch now for that;" and then he said, with his bitterest accent, to the knight—"This is the business for which the Bishop of Winchester wants me," and he immediately withdrew.

"Sir Amias de Crosby," said the earl fiercely, "How dared you to make an instrument of me?"

The tone of this rallied the scattered spirits of Sir Amias. There was in it menace and insult, and the force of habit for a moment mastered the consternation of remorse.

"Dared!" exclaimed Sir Amias; and he added contemptuously—"Because my help was required for your own purposes, my lord. You wished to marry your daughter to Lord Suffolk, and"——

"Silence!" cried the earl, with a stamp that made the house shake; "your frauds, your perjuries, are too manifest. Miserable man!"

The transient courage of habit was past, and the sense of conscious guilt overpowered every other feeling. After a short interval the earl added—"Have the lady and her son survived the plague?"

Sir Amias made no answer; but looked at him with a colourless countenance, a wandering eye, and a quivering lip.

"I demand to know," said the earl sternly, "if they are yet alive?"

"I know not, I know not," was the answer of Sir Amias, uttered in an accent of almost idiocy, and still regarding the earl with

the same wild vacancy. At that moment Ralph Hanslap returned in alarm and breathless, followed by several officers of the city.

The entrance of these men, whom the knight instantly conceived were come for him again, roused him, and he laid his hand upon his sword with the intention of defending himself; but the Earl of Lincoln seized his arm, and held him till the officers removed the sword.

" The lady, and Adonijah the Jew," cried Ralph Hanslap, " are with a crowd at the gates. She is frantic, and says, that last night her son was murdered, and she accuses Sir Amias of the deed."

" Of that he is innocent," replied the knight, calmly and collectedly, adding, " I knew not till this moment that they were alive."

" It is the day of judgment," said Ralph Hanslap. " The graves give up their dead."

" I thought, Hanslap, that you were true

to me?" replied Sir Amias, with a voice that expressed the acutest sense of helplessness.

"In all wherein I have been trusted you have ever found me faithful; and had you confided in me that Lord Edmund was not killed, but only a prisoner, perhaps to the peril of my soul I might have even served you in that."

"Have you known, that in all this time Lord Edmund was alive?" inquired the earl with a scowl.

"I have suspected worse," replied Ralph Hanslap; and he made the spirit of Sir Amias quake with the dreadful avidity of his eye.

"Traitor!" exclaimed the knight, "and have you been but doubling the chain that has dragged me to this? But of the murder I am guiltless."

A great noise and clamour within the house arose at this moment, and other officers of the city rushed into the gallery.

"Sir Amias is not the person," cried one

of them; "it has been discovered that some of the Earl of Lincoln's servants have been concerned in the business." And the officers immediately arrested the earl, on suspicion of having instigated them, at the same time releasing Sir Amias.

Ralph Hanslap, who had by this time recovered his coolness and self-possession, stood, looking alternately at his patron and the earl, scarcely able to distinguish which of the two was in the greatest perturbation.

"Sir Amias de Crosby," said the earl, as he delivered his sword to the officers, "you have a terrible debt to pay. You gave me good reasons, date, circumstance, mark, evidence, all backed by the security of your heretofore untarnished character, that the young man was an adventurer, the true son of that Hubert Neville, who has been as a ghost to you; and my servants, knowing how I have resented his pretensions to my daughter, may in some rash encounter have put him to

death. Such, gentlemen, I doubt not, will the case prove; but, till the matter is properly sifted, I submit myself a prisoner."

"Give me my sword again," said Sir Amias to the officer, who held it in his hand; but Ralph Hanslap snatched it away as the earl with the others retired.

"No; this weapon you shall not at this time have;" and the officer following his companions, Hanslap added, "I have been long in companionship with you, Sir Amias, and I thought I had your confidence, till I discovered that you had bribed Hubert Neville to do what I could have done better. Yes, Sir Amias, I chanced to be under that window in the garden on the morning when Lord Edmund set out for Scotland.—The casement was open, and I overheard your conversation with Hubert Neville. But"—and he paused, looking steadily at Sir Amias,—"I did not think that Lord Edmund had survived the battle."

"And how has it been," cried Sir Amias, hoarsely, as if his throat and tongue were parched with thirst, "that you have for such a number of years given me so many proofs of incorruptible fidelity? You have hastened on my ruin, Hanslap; you have helped me in my offences."

"I was a dog, Sir Amias, in my attachment to you; why was it that you withheld your confidence and gave it to Hubert Neville, a fellow that had not the tithe of my honesty?—The tithe!—he betrayed his master, and for that you preferred him to me."

"I then thought, Hanslap," said Sir Amias with a sigh, "that you would not have served me against my brother."

"And for my probity then I was rejected. Have I not proved to you since,—have I not made you feel in the bottom of your heart, that I was a better man for your purpose than Hubert Neville?"

" Tremendous Heaven !" exclaimed Sir Amias in amazement," and has all the seeming true service which you have so long done for me arisen out of the workings of vindictive resentment ?"

" Yes," was the stern answer; " and now 'tis at an end, and I shall enjoy the fruits of my revenge."

And with these words, says the Chronicler, Ralph Hanslap departed, leaving Sir Amias in the state of a forlorn creature within the fold and coil of that great eastern serpent which never parteth with its prey.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PENITENT.

So shall the devious mind, that hath deplored
Its errors past, to Virtue be restored;
And, as Repentance drops the bitter tears,
Mercy expunge the stains of other years.

Δ's Prospects of the World.

There is such an austere simplicity in Nature, that her physical operations cannot be changed but by the interference of a moral cause; nor the necessary course of her moral proceedings altered without employing physical force. This apophthegm, when applied to man, means that, unless he can be born again, he shall continue throughout the hereafter of his life much the same sort of being that he has been in the heretofore. And it was so illustrated by the conduct of Sir Amias

de Crosby, who, as soon as Ralph Hanslap had left him, his consternation having in the meanwhile in some degree subsided, began to reflect in what manner he should act with regard to his brother. In the midst of his reflections Hubert Neville was announced.

The meeting was at first a little embarrassing on both sides; but after a few brief questions, and unsatisfactory answers, the serious business of the scene commenced, by Neville saying—

"As I had promised to you, Sir Amias, that if Lord Edmund received a wound—"

"There is no occasion," interrupted the knight, "to refer to that now."

"Well, to pass it by; the wound he received was not mortal."

Sir Amias rubbed his forehead, and impatiently wrung his hands, as he exclaimed—

"I will hear nothing of that!"

"You shall, Sir Amias," replied the other solemnly. "I am not the man now that I

was then; I have had the plague. The ill that was in my nature has been cast off in foul sores and dreadful sickness, and I am a new creature, hating the things that were my enjoyment. Your brother's wound I said was not mortal."

"Overwhelming justice, come not so fast! Let not thy avenging wheels crush me thus suddenly!" were the despairing exclamations with which Sir Amias again interrupted Neville, who looked at him for a moment compassionately, and then said calmly—

"But, Sir Amias, happy it is for us both that I had not the heart to execute your purpose."

The mind of Sir Amias was mounting to frenzy. He dropped on his knees, and wildly raised his hands. In a moment, however, he again started up, and walked, or rather rushed, several times across the room, crying—

"No, no: I cannot return thanks for that. With me the deed was as done."

He then halted, and inquired more composedly, if it was true that Lord Edmund was still alive?"

Hubert Neville looked at him with sorrow and pity, and said—

"No, Sir Amias; Heaven, by its own means, has done for him what hell and you bribed me to undertake. His wound was not mortal, but he fell into the hands of the highland Scots. I was taken with him, and carried to an island beyond the mountains, among a people whose language we could not understand, nor they ours. It was there that Lord Edmund died."

"Then he is dead?" inquired Sir Amias, as if to be better assured of the fact.

Hubert Neville did not immediately answer, but raised his hand, and mournfully shook his head;—the knight, however, heeded him not, but added—

"How, in so many years, has it been that I have never heard of you?"

"Could I have sooner escaped, I would long ago, perhaps, have demanded the wages which I was not permitted to earn."

"Ralph Hanslap," said the knight, after a pause, "has quitted my service; you shall have his office, Neville. You can yet do me an essential service."

"Sir Amias de Crosby," replied the penitent, "you have not had the plague."

"I am infatuated," cried the knight; "my thoughts rise, and my tongue talks from some impulse that drives me to perdition;"—and he then said, in an abject and desponding accent,—"I am in your power, Neville,"—exclaiming with something like a shriek,—"and in Ralph Hanslap's."

Hubert Neville gently touched his arm, and said—"Be calm, Sir Amias, you are still in your own power;—but have you done as you intended,—denied the marriage of Lord Edmund's lady and bastardized his son?"

"I have—I have."

"Then acknowledge their rights, and repent of what you have done."

"Heaven has put it out of my power. Long, long since would I have done so; I wanted but evidence enough to satisfy the world, without bringing ruin on myself."

"The world!—And stand you more in the reverence of men's opinion than in the dread of Heaven?—Proclaim the guilt you have committed;—make public confession of what you bribed me to do;—I will bear witness before all the world to my part and undertaking in the crime."

Sir Amias stood for some time motionless, and then said—

"No; I cannot do that, but I will give all up to my nephew.—Ha!—I have forgotten that he too is dead,—murdered by my causing."

Neville shuddered, and looked pale with horror.

"I am not, however, guilty of his blood,"

added the knight;—"thank Heaven, in the intention of his death I had no part."

"Then to him you can make no atonement," said the penitent solemnly; "but it strengthens the claim of the other that you have more offended."

"She will accept of nothing;—she shuns me;—she hath slandered me to all the kingdom."

"Slandered Sir Amias de Crosby!—O fye upon the word from you of her! It was not, however, of the Lady Rothelan that I spoke."

"Of whom then?—I have wronged no other."

"Yes, Sir Amias, there is another,—a terrible other."

"I will do any private penance."

"If you will not, Sir Amias, satisfy avenging justice by your own act, it must be done by mine."

"What do you mean?"

"I will publish all that I know,—I will declare our compact."

"And what will that avail, insolent?—expect you to be credited before me?—I have made my election, Neville;—I am willing to make restitution,—but not to sacrifice my character;—that I will preserve at all hazards."

"Sir Amias de Crosby, I have done," replied Neville firmly;—"I have fulfilled a vow that I made when ill of the plague;—and since I cannot awaken you to contrition, I will bring you to punishment."

"I have told you," said Sir Amias, in some degree awed by the sternness of the penitent, "that I do repent of what I have done;—that I am willing to give all back which I have wrongfully, as I confess, acquired; but let there be some show of reason for so doing."

Neville shook his head as he answered—"There is no contrition, Sir Amias, in all

that ;—you are but afraid of being discovered, and you shall be discovered."

"Do your worst then,—I have chosen my ground."

"You have slandered your brother's widow, and bastardized his son."

"Let them prove the contrary."

"His son cannot,—he is dead—murdered, as you have confessed, by your causing ;—but the lady——

"I will hear no more."

"But you shall, Sir Amias."

"Insolent,—quit the house,—do your worst."

"I have done ;—I have but to tell you, that I was a witness to her marriage ;—and that I have here in this casket proofs and documents under your brother's own hand that she was his wife ;—I got them for the guilty purpose of making you my slave ;—I have preserved them for avenging justice."

With these words Hubert Neville immediately retired.

CHAPTER VII.

A LOVE SCENE.

Love, like its emblem fire, begets itself,
And, when enkindled in two faithful hearts,
Blends in one flame, and, rising as it burns,
Points to the heavenly source from whence it came.

THE WORD OF HONOUR.

THE reader needs not to be told, that the alarm of Rothelan's murder had arisen from the manner in which he was carried away; but it is fit now, that we should combine together those circumstances which, though in themselves of small amount, are yet essential to the development of our story.

It would appear then, that in the morning when Rothelan looked out from the window of the chamber in which he was confined, he discovered he was in Windsor Castle, and in one of those towers which, northward,

overlook the river. He therefore concluded that he had been seized for his old unpardoned offence, of having been taken in the ranks of the enemy; but he could not very well account to himself for the circumstance of having been brought to a palace instead of being committed to a common prison. The cause, however, of his wonder is one of those remarkable incidents which arose after the pestilence.

The Earl of Lincoln's servants knew the apprehensions which their master entertained of Rothelan's pretensions to the Lady Blanche, and having accidentally discovered that he had survived the calamity, concerted among themselves to place him in confinement until the projected marriage between the Lord Suffolk and their young lady was completed. They were doubtless the more emboldened to this adventure, by the state in which the country was left by the pestilence.

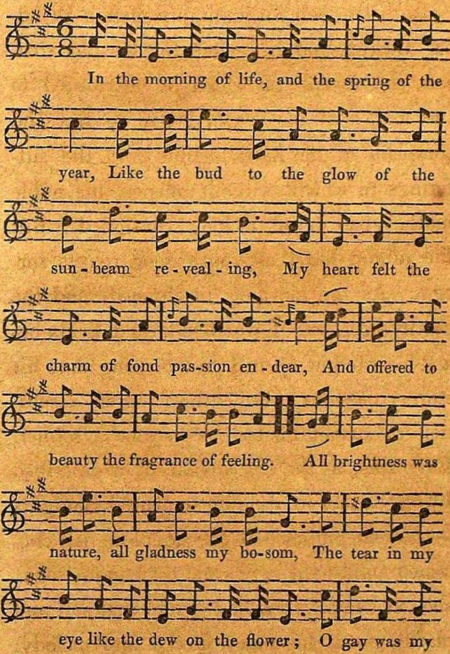
"All things," says our Chronicler, "were then found in confusion; many poor lack-wits had made themselves great possessions with the ownerless riches of those who had perished. Troops of dissolute creatures went rioting and carousing from house to house. Revenge and Hatred had a carnival, and honest men were missed that died not of the plague, but by the knife of the irresponsible assassin. Some thought the angel of the second vial more awful than he that went before; and there was a fear in sad minds as if chaos were come again, and the elements of society so sundered as to be never more conjoined. Thus it was, that those men of the Earl of Lincoln's hall, dreadless of justice, carried their prisoner to Windsor; and with certain of their cup-fellows in the king's household, woful proof of the universal lawlessness! laid him fast in the royal castle, even while the king, with the remnants of the court, was there deploring the desolation

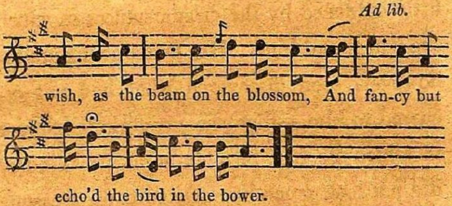
which had so laid waste his once fair and well-ordered kingdom."

Rothelan being thus imprisoned in Windsor Castle, and believing for his old treason, the revival of which he attributed to the malice of his uncle, began to fret and complain of his hard fortune, and the sufferings to which, without offence, his noble mother had been so long consigned. But the plump heart of youth soon rejects sorrow. As the morning brightened, and the goodly prospect of woodlands and fields below his window opened to the rising sun, his stormy passions subsided into a serene resolution to sustain his fate as became a soldier. Even this, as the day advanced, is described by our author as yielding to gentler thoughts—the remembrance of the hopes he had cherished amidst the revels and the banquetings; and, as usual, when he fell into that soft and placid mood, his fancy flowed into melody,

and the images of the morning suggested the following

SONG.





While he was thus singing, and his spirit rising into more happy reflections, he heard the window of the chamber above suddenly opened, and in a moment after the delightful voice of the Lady Blanche calling him by name. But love-feasts at windows have been rendered stale by that of Romeo and Juliet, and, therefore, though our author's, with its impassioned flights and flashes of joyous tenderness, far excels, we shall not extract it; neither how the lovers congratulated one another on having escaped the plague wishing, in the same breath, that they had both died, since cruel destiny forbade their love.

But much as the Lady Blanche rejoiced in the safety of her lover, her pleasure was not a

little saddened by the circumstances in which she had found him. Her feminine ingenuity, however, soon discovered what had not occurred to him,—that the mysterious manner in which he had been brought to Windsor did not look much like a seizure for treason; and she suggested for his consolation, that in all probability her father or Lord Suffolk had some hand in the conspiracy.

"But," said she, "I will inform the king, who hath been much disquieted concerning you; for, last night, a servant, who was supposed to have fallen in battle with your father, arrived from Scotland, and is gone to London to ascertain your fate."

In this manner was Rothelan informed of Hubert Neville's return, on the morning of the same day that he so avengingly visited Sir Amias,—the sequel of whose machinations we shall now proceed to narrate.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHAIN BROKEN.

I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,
And wish th' estate o' the world were now undone.

MACBETH.

WHEN the penitent, Hubert Neville, left the knight in that state of consternation, which his declaration was so well calculated to produce, it appears that he went immediately from Crosby-house towards the Guildhall of the city, for the purpose of disclosing the conspiracy in which he had himself been engaged against his master. In his way thither he met Ralph Hanslap, who, on arriving at Winchester-house, had been told that the bishop was gone on a special summons to the king at Windsor.

Of their meeting and greeting we are furnished with a long and circumstantial account. Many questions were asked and answered, little relevant to the current of our narrative; none of them, however, without an object, at least on the part of the penitent.

Hubert Neville, like the fox in the fable, having lost his own tail, was devoutly zealous to induce others to cut off their's also. Not that we question the sincerity of his repentance, by making so unfeeling and so flippant a remark, as some of the rigidly righteous may perhaps be pleased, in their Christian charity, to call it; we only insinuate, and that too in the most indirect mode possible, that, let a man be as fervent as flame in his apostacy, whether it be from virtue or from vice, he will still be desirous of the countenance of his companions. And it happened that Hubert Neville found Ralph Hanslap in the most susceptible state for receiving, with due effect, the impression of his

admonitions. Ralph had fostered his resentment to seed—it had prospered beyond expectation—and having come to maturity, and been shed, he felt, at the time of their meeting, as if his portion in the world's business was at an end; no person, therefore, could be in a finer condition for becoming a saint—gratified in his sin, warm, glowing, and exulting from the satisfaction of his revenge; could a man who had served hell so well not think himself free to aspire to the enjoyments of heaven?

Accordingly, after those interchanges of old companionship, which the reader can better imagine than we have time to write, when Neville told him of the change wrought by the plague on his heart, and of the guilty obduracy of Sir Amias, they resolved to return together, in order to try what their united exhortations might yet effect. In this, to do Ralph justice, the Chronicler seems to suspect there was a lurking of affec-

tion, and that, even after the inveterate constancy whereby he had pursued and accomplished the purpose which induced him to make himself seemingly so ready an agent to the fraudulent devices of his patron, he was nevertheless desirous to spare him, for pity, from the ignominy of public retribution. Thus it happened, as we have said, that the two old sinners and young saints walked arm in arm, if not innocently hand in hand, back to Crosby-house.

The porter at the gate being accidentally absent from his post, they ascended the steps that led into the hall, and thence proceeded to the gallery where Hubert Neville had left Sir Amias standing. He was not however there, nor was any other person.

They halted and conferred together on the propriety of Ralph Hanslap entering the knight's apartment, which communicated with the gallery, and the door of which stood a little open.

It was agreed that Ralph Hanslap should go in, and he went forward with that intention.

When he had approached within three or four paces of the door, he stepped softly and listened, and then halted.

"He is not within," said he; "shall we wait till he come?"

"I will inquire at the servants," replied Hubert Neville, "if he has gone out. I don't think he has, for I left him in a state that would rather make him shun than incur the observation of others."

A slight rustle within the room, followed by a low and slow murmur, ending with a a sigh, told them, that, notwithstanding the silence, Sir Amias was there.

Ralph Hanslap looked to his companion, and moved one step from the door, as he said in a whisper—

"Let us wait; he is thinking of your words. I have never before heard him utter any thing so dismal."

"Are you afraid?" was the firm and stern reply of the penitent. "If you are, then are you like himself, and I will hold no communion with you."

With these words he turned to go away; but Hanslap, with considerable emotion, caught him by the arm, as he said—"Let us deal gently with him—gently—I have seen him often in terrible flights and fears, but never heard him express his contrition in a sound so full of wo before. I do confess it has frozen my blood."

"Go in and see," answered the merciless proselyte of devotion; "go in and see; tell him that we bring balm for his spirit."

Ralph Hanslap looked towards the door of the apartment, and for a moment appeared disposed to advance, but suddenly checking himself, he said—

"No, Neville, go you first; you have already told him your mind—I can but think of the time when we were both young—what

has overcome me, that I should be thus melted!"

Hubert Neville made no answer, but walked with wide strides and a knotted visage to the door, which he swang from him; and, looking scornfully back at Ralph Hanslap, was about to enter—

"What is that?" exclaimed the other, rushing forward. The penitent started back at the wildness of the cry, and beheld a stream of blood issuing from the door. Ralph Hanslap, however, ran into the room, and in the same breath came reeling back, ghastly, and holding his temples.

"We are too late," said Hubert Neville, after a short pause—"Is it not so?"

"You have screwed the rack too harshly," replied Hanslap with a sigh. "I did fear at times that it might come to this; but I had still some hope from his indecision, that he would never be so rash. He has escaped from us both."

"He hath gone to his punishment—and the manner of his death proves the greatness of his offence," said the avenging penitent. "But is he indeed dead?"

"Go in; I think so. Oh! I could not look on such a sight again, of one that I have known and served so long."

Hubert Neville went into the room, and soon after returned with the sword of Sir Amias in his hand.

"Yes," said he, "it is all over, and it was done with this weapon."

Ralph Hanslap took the sword, and looked at the blood, as it trickled down the blade, dropping upon the floor; all the anger and the jealousy which he had so long and so sullenly cherished, were in that moment forgotten; and, though he was of sterner stuff than to shed tears, his bosom laboured with a sigh so deep and painful, that it might be described as a groan of anguish.

As he was so standing with the sword in

his hand, one of the servants came into the gallery. By this time it was known in the household that their master and Hanslap had quarrelled; and by this time, too, the blood had flowed far along the floor. The servant on seeing it, and the guilty weapon in the hand of the self-discarded squire, gave the alarm, and, before time was permitted for explanation, the two penitents were made prisoners as murderers.

CHAPTER IX.

A CONSUMMATION.

———When you have told enough
'Tis wise to stop.

PRITCHARD'S COURTIER.

"IN the meantime the Earl of Lincoln being," as the Chronicler says, "no poor knave, gave such assurance to the Mayor of London of clean hands as to the rumoured death of the lady's son, that the right worshipful magistrate, on the pledge of his naked promise to answer the accusation, set him at large; for in those days, not as in these, great reverence was paid to the nobility among the primates of the city, who accounted it a matter of signal honour and renown to have leave to banquet the least of them, at the

cost of often more than a year's profit in trade."

That urbane consideration for the dignity of the earl, gave however but little satisfaction to the Lady Albertina and Adonijah, who, when they heard in what manner he had been set at liberty, went to the court of King's Bench, and became importunate for justice. Thus it happened, that they were in the hall when the servants of Sir Amias de Crosby carried thither Hubert Neville and Ralph Hanslap, who, being caught, as it was stated, in the fact, and with the weapon of the crime still wet in their possession, were brought to immediate trial.

A great crowd had followed them, and the lady and the old Jew were swirled in its eddies to the skirts of the spectators, far beyond the reach of hearing what passed, or of seeing the proceedings. The name, however, of Sir Amias de Crosby so circulated among the multitude, coupled with assassination,

that both Adonijah and the widow believed the knight, instead of the earl, was discovered to have been the destroyer of her son.

The impression so worked upon their feelings, especially upon those of the disconsolate mother, that every one around sympathized with her sufferings, and it became quickly known that she was the same lady, of whose wrongs so much had been said. A passage, in consequence, was soon voluntarily opened for her and Adonijah to pass on into the court, which they reached just as the servants had given their evidence, which would have warranted a verdict of "Guilty."

But what came to pass, says our author, as the afflicted lady and that aged Jew made their appearance before the Chief Justice, would better befit the pencil than the pen to record. For when she beheld Hubert Neville, and recognised in him one of the witnesses of her marriage, she eagerly struggled

forward with far-stretched arms, and with a sad and piercing cry, interdicted, in the name of Heaven and of justice, the proceedings of the court. Then there was a noise and a pressing forward from the multitude in the hall. The judges and jury started from their seats; Ralph Hanslap stood in amazement, for he believed she had perished in the pestilence; Hubert Neville drew from his bosom the vouchers and declarations obtained from her deceased lord; Adonijah uttered a triumphant shout, and the hall resounded with acclamations, which drowned the commands of all the officers to obtain silence.

At last, however, the tumult subsided, and the prisoners being put on their defence, Hubert Neville set forth the purpose for which he had visited Sir Amias; and the vouchers in his hand; the well-known circumstances of the lady's story, together with her testimony to many things in the conduct of Sir Amias, satisfied the jury that the

knight had fulfilled his destiny, and had died by his own hand.

Lady Blanche being at Windsor when the queen, on whom she was then in attendance, made her appearance for the day, lost no time in communicating her discovery of the surreptitious imprisonment of Rothelan, with such a conjectural commentary thereon as left no doubt on the mind of her majesty, that both the Earl of Lincoln and Sir Amias de Crosby were the master-springs of the outrage. The king by this means was made acquainted with the whole affair, and the prisoner, after a short investigation of the business, was set at liberty.

But the extraordinary character of such an occurrence at that time, and the rank and consideration of the parties supposed to be implicated, induced his majesty to resolve, that the complaint of the Lady Albertina should be immediately revived; an express was accordingly sent to London for the Bishop of

Winchester to repair thither without delay, in order that his recollection of the subject might assist the inquiry. It is, however, unnecessary to proceed with the dry and somewhat tedious details of the Chronicler, as the sagacious reader cannot but discover that the story is now brought to a conclusion. Little indeed remains to be told regarding the fortunes of Rothelan. For, in the course of a few days, in consequence of the interest which the king himself took in the investigation, the marriage-rights of the Lady Albertina were fully acknowledged, and her son admitted to all the honours and domains of his father, as well as to the possessions of his uncle.

The effect of these things on the mind of the Earl of Lincoln was of course most consolatory. His eyes were opened to the excellent discernment of his daughter, the Lady Blanche, in preferring young Rothelan to the rather too-well-stricken-in-years Lord of Suffolk; and their marriage was, after due

preparations, celebrated with all befitting pomp and revelry. And here perhaps we might fitly extract our author's description of the ceremonials and the banquettings; but speed and brevity are the virtues of a consummation, and we must, without longer transgressing on the reader's patience, thankful indeed that he has followed us so long, hasten to wind up the short residue of the story in what concerns the other characters.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

———————Mine end draws on apace;
Lend me thy hand.—Ah! it hath yet the touch
Which here enkindled what hath work'd my woe.

ANONYMOUS.

ALTHOUGH the fortunes of Rothelan were restored to their proper course, there was yet something which, the Chronicler says, no one could understand. Great re-payments were offered to Adonijah for his singular munificence, but he accepted nothing; he only desired, in his old age, to be permitted to reside with the Lady Albertina, in the lodge which he had bought for her in the time of her misfortunes, and in which, after the marriage of her son, she continued to make her home.

"All my household blood," said he, "perished in the pestilence, and now I am very aged, and would fain have the soft hand of the daughter of my adoption to close my old eyes when I shall die, and she shall have all my treasuries."

"Not for that," replied the lady, "but for that singular constancy of kindness with which you befriended me, claim and take whatever I can give."

"And thus," continues our author, "Adonijah went and dwelt with the lady, who ministered to his growing infirmities with the tenderness of a true daughter, till he fell sick with the weariness of old age, and was drawing nigh to death. Then, having requested all others to retire from his chamber, he bade her sit by his pillow, and spoke to her in this manner:

"According to the custom of our tribes, when I was a green stripling, my father did choose my wife. He was a man well stricken

in years, and afflicted with the infection of avarice; therefore he did procure me Leah, who, for age, might have been my mother; but she had many riches, that were all lovely graces in the eyes of my father. Our hearts never met; and I became like a spirit that is blind, or a rudderless ship in a misty sea. So I began to cleave, like my brethren, to gold, and to worship the sordid idol, and to lay upon its altars the bonds that were wet with the tears of many who were very friendless; and I forgot the beautiful mornings, and the sun and the clear waters, and all that is happiness. But when I heard of your jeopardies, the eye of my bosom was opened, and my heart wept with joy, that the good Heavens were pleased to show me a way to taste of the blessing of love. Yes! love, lady—Oh, how I did love you!—but it is all over now. I am a very, very mortal thing, —my feet are already dead, and surely there

is no passion in the clay of that old feeble hand."

The lady sat almost moved to tears by his pathetic tenderness. After a short interval, Adonijah resumed, with a less impassioned accent—

"Yes, lady, I have loved you, and the more tenderly, for it was without hope. You thought I made myself your father but for pity,—never was such pity in man for woman. Oh! it has been a delightful reward to my hopeless fondness, that you have thought me but your friend. When I first beheld you, a new element entered into my nature, and my spirit glowed with the light of your beauty; but there was sadness even in the joy of that inspiration, for you were then hanging on the arm of a goodly youth; it was your husband, and I was far his elder—a despised and ungracious Jew."

While he was thus speaking, the Lady Albertina recalled to mind numberless little in-

stances of warmth in his manner, the promptings of secret passion, both at the time of his first visit to her in Crosby-house, and often afterwards; at the moment they surprised her, but the immediate compassion with which they were succeeded chastened the remembrance of them into reverence and gratitude.

Adonijah paused, and continued for some time silent, as if he expected she would reply; but this disclosure of the motives of his kindness affected her in so many different feelings, that she could not speak. Her hand was resting on his pillow; he drew it towards him, and pressed it to his lips; a sigh, accompanied with a slight convulsive pressure of her hand, at the same instant roused her attention, and when she looked at him, he was dead.

" Thus," says the Chronicler, " died that fond old man, whose friendship for the forlorn lady was the admiration of all men; for until he had himself disclosed the secret fountain-head of the pure love by which he was

motioned to make himself as her father, such had been the care with which he concealed it, that no one ever called the unparalleled constancy of his kindness aught but a wonderful impulse of delicate charity."

And now having thus, from the embroidered tissue of the Book of Beauty, as its marvellous diction may well be described, unwoven one of its golden threads, and, with certain wool and bombast, worked it into a tapestry, quaintly figured with the incidents of the story of Rothelan, we shall suspend the shuttle of our industry, and give the courteous reader leave and leisure to contemplate the manufacture with all imaginable contentment. Briefly, however, intimating for his solace in the contemplation, that in the second French war, with which, on the accession of John, the son of Philip, to the crown of France, King Edward resolved to vindicate his own pretence to the inheritance, Rothelan joined the Black Prince at Bourdeaux, and

was present in all his subsequent campaigns, both in France and Arragon. In the great battle of Poictiers, when the French monarch, as a prisoner, resigned his sword to the prince, posterity knows that Rothelan assisted him to dismount from his horse. Willingly would we extract the description of this ceremonial, as well as many other splendid passages, but for the manifest impropriety of tacking a new series of consequences to premises, the natural and dramatic *finis* of which was the death of Sir Amias de Crosby.

Remitting, therefore, the curiosity of those who desire to read of Rothelan's heroic achievements to the source from which we have derived our materials, as well as to the histories of the time, we have only further to mention, that with respect to the subsequent fortunes of the Lady Albertina, of Ralph Hanslap, and of Hubert Neville, the Chronicler says very little that is satisfactory. It would seem, however, that the lady lived to become

a great-grandmother, the only heroine of romance that ever attained to that dignity; in so far, therefore, she is an original character. "When she died," says the Chronicler, "her spirit was wafted to Paradise, as gently as the breathing of the summer gale conveys away the perfume of the rose."

The fate of Ralph Hanslap is involved in very considerable obscurity. Whether he went on a penitential visit to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, and there died, or joined the army in France, and was there slain, seems doubtful. Our author only mentions, that, for some time, he wandered about the town, communing with himself, and avoiding all commerce and intercourse with his acquaintance. "When last seen," (we quote The Book,) "it was in the grey of the evening twilight, and near the unblest grave where Sir Amias de Crosby was buried. He had a staff in his hand, and a scrip at his side, like one in the performance of a weary pil-

grimage. The new moon was in the sky, but her light was wan and dim. Many travellers came and went by the four roads; but the forlorn man, heeding them not, stood looking at the heap of stones which children had cast upon the spot; and some said, that they thought they heard him lowly moaning as they were passing him by."

As for Hubert Neville, every body knows he became a monk in the abbey of St Peter's, Westminster, where he led a life of the most exemplary austerity. His tomb is supposed to be still in the cloisters, but the epitaph and ornaments have of course been all effaced. This, however, he owes to himself, and to his extraordinary penitence and piety; for out of the just sense which he entertained of his own unworthiness, he requested that his remains might be deposited under the door-step as you come from the church into the cloisters, in order that he might be constantly trodden under foot; and his catholic humi-

lity was indulged:—the abbot of that time, as a special favour to his ghost, allowed the thoroughfare from Poets' Corner to be opened for the express purpose of having the grave of so great a sinner and so excellent a saint well trampled. Thus it has happened, that idle boys and disorderly persons using the passage, have had such opportunities to destroy the monuments,—a striking instance of the danger which may sometimes ensue from complying with even the lowliest wishes of the most saintly men. We hope, however, for the nightly quiet of the dean and chapter, that there is no truth in the report of an intention on their part to shut up the thoroughfare; for it is confidently averred, that the spirits of many saints are very revengeful;—and if it should be so with that of Hubert Neville, they may well think what will happen to them, when, hovering from its nightly haunt, it comes to demand its immemorial rights and time-honoured privileges.

Far better would it be, and more acceptable to their own interests, were they to excavate for his bones, and show them at the rate of sixpence a-head, over and above the ordinary admittance to their other shows!—and so with this for the present we say,—Good Night.

THE END.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE possibilities of Romance bear the same sort of comparative resemblance to occasional occurrences in real life which the works of Art do to those of Nature. Fiction, for example, has not yet invented any description of human affairs, so marvellous in incident, and so dramatic in circumstances and conclusion, as the public transactions of the French Revolution; and yet how much more romantic must have been the fortunes of many an individual who bore an unknown part in the vicissitudes of that great tragedy. It is, therefore, not so much the business of the romancer to invent wonderful incidents, as to depict characters suitable to the incidents he intends to describe, and to sustain them in their adventures with consistency.

How far the tale of Rothelan shall in this respect be found to have answered the endeavours of the author, the reader alone can determine; but the story which suggested the original idea of the fable, is much more extraordinary than the attempt which has been made to invest modern facts and observations with the garb of antique fiction.

Though, for a purpose sufficiently obvious, the scene of the romance has been laid in a remote age, the lawyer, if any such should chance to dip into these pages, will find that it is but a version of the celebrated case of the Annesley family. The circumstances which came out in evidence during the judicial proceedings of that romantic story, as detailed in the State Trials, far exceed in improbability any thing which a romance-writer, with a due regard to criticism, would venture to relate; and yet the cause was tried in the reign of George II. But, perhaps, it will be more interesting to quote here a brief contemporary account of the circumstances alluded to.

"*From the Memoirs of an unfortunate young Nobleman, returned from a thirteen Years' Slavery in America, where he had been sent by the wicked Contrivances of his cruel Uncle.*

"THE first forty pages relate to the noble parents of this abandoned child, whose life, it seems, was an obstruction to the grant of some leases which the extravagance of the baron, his father, made necessary. He was therefore removed from a public to a very obscure school; and letters were written to corroborate a report of his death, and of that of the baroness, who had been forced to retire for subsistence to the duke, her father, in another kingdom. After which, the relation says, that the baron, her husband, married a woman who happened, amidst the variety he had tried, to please and fix him.

"On his father ceasing to pay for his board at school, this young nobleman began to feel his misfortunes. His clothes grew ragged and too little for him; his fare coarse and scanty; no recreations allowed; never looked upon but with frowns, nor spoke to but with reproaches; continually reprimanded; often cruelly beaten; sometimes barely for not doing what none took the pains to instruct him in. While others at his age were at their school-exercises, he was employed either in drawing water, cleaning knives, or some servile office; thus he continued for more than two years, when, growing more sensible of his ill usage, he began to murmur, but was told, that he was kept only on charity, and if he liked not that way of life, he might seek a better. The poor innocent, thinking he could not fare worse, without clothes, money, or the least hint given him where to find his father, turned his back upon that scene of woe, travelled without knowing where to go, till he came to a small village. His tender limbs being much fatigued, for he was but turned of ten years old, he sat down at a door, and wept bitterly for want of food. A good old woman relieved him with some bread, meat, and butter-milk, which enabled him to pursue his journey till he arrived at

the capital. Here, friendless and hungry, he fell again into tears; which not availing him, he was obliged to beg, and, by his modest deportment, obtained some relief, and at night took up his lodging in a church porch. Next morning, recollecting that his schoolmaster talked of writing to his father in this city, he went from one street to another inquiring for the baron, at length was informed, that his lordship had retired from town some time, none knew whither, on account of his debts. Our noble wanderer, now without hope, hunger pressing, and some churlish people threatening him with the house of correction for asking relief, he took to running of errands, and procured a mean subsistence, after the manner of other poor boys. It happened one day some boys fell upon him, and beat him severely, calling him dog and scoundrel, words he could less bear than the blows. He answered, They lied; he was better than the best of them; his father was a lord; and he should be a lord when a man. After this he was in derision called my lord, which the mistress of a house hearing, called him, and seeing he had no deformity to deserve the title, as vulgarly given, Tell me, says she, why they call you my lord.—Madam, replied he, I shall be a lord when my father dies.—Ay! said she, who is your father?—The Baron of A——, and my mother is the Baroness of A——, but she has left the kingdom, and they say I shall never see her again.—Who tells you all this?—I know it very well; I lived in a great house once, and had a footman, and then was carried to a great school, and was reckoned the head boy there, and had the finest clothes; afterwards I was carried to another school, and there they abused me sadly, because they said my father would not pay for me.—Why do you not go to your father?—I don't know where to find him, answered the poor innocent, and burst into tears.—Do you think you should know him?—Yes, very well, though it is a great while since I saw him; but I remember he used to come in a coach and six to see me when I lived at the great school.—Moved at this account, but willing to examine him more strictly, she said, You are a lying boy, for that lord's son is dead.—He re-

plied, Indeed, I tell the truth; I never was sick but once, when I had a fall, and cut my head, and here is the mark, putting his hair aside, and my father was very angry with those who had the care of me.—The woman, who kept an eating-house, to which his father sometimes came, having heard that his son and heir was dead, felt no little surprise to see the child reduced to so miserable a condition. She knew enough of the extravagance and necessities of the father, and that certain leases, on which money was raised, could not be granted while this son was publicly known to be alive; and, not doubting his innocent assertions, gave him not only food but clothes, and promised to write to his father.

"In the meantime his uncle came to the house, and the good woman told him what she had heard and done. He said it was an imposition, for his nephew was dead,—I mean the boy that was called my brother's son; for though his lady had a child, he was not the father.—I can say nothing to such a distinction, replied the woman, but as he was born in wedlock he must be the heir, and ought to be educated in an agreeable manner.

"The uncle desired to see him, who, being new-clothed, and having beautiful hair, came in with an engaging mien, and most respectful behaviour to his benefactress, as well as to the gentleman, as he appeared to be of distinction, who, instead of being moved with compassion, sternly cried out, What name is this you take upon you?—I take none upon me, sir, but what I brought into the world with me, and was always called by. Nobody will say but I am the son of the Baron of A——. By whom? demanded the gentleman.—By his wife, the Baroness of A——, replied the other, with more resolution than could be expected.—Then you are a bastard, cried the uncle, for your mother was a ———. If I was a man, you should not use my mother or me thus, whoever you are, said the child, with tears in his eyes, which moved the woman of the house to intercede for milder treatment.

"The child said at last he knew the gentleman was his uncle, for he came once with his father to see him at

school; but the good uncle replied, he knew nothing of it, and went out of the room; the woman followed, and entreated him to consider his nephew, and not refuse him a proper education. He promised to speak to his brother, but desired her to keep the affair private. He was indeed as good as his word; informed his brother of the condition his nephew was in; but observed further, that although some care should be taken of his education, it would be of ill consequence, on account of the leases, were he known to be alive before the baron's decease. He therefore advised St Omer's or some place beyond sea, where he might be trained up at a small expense. The baron readily approved this advice, and gave his brother money to reimburse the woman, and for further expenses. The uncle took the conduct of the whole affair upon himself. The first step he made was to agree with the master of a ship bound for Pennsylvania, for a sum of money paid down to transport a boy thither, and sell him to the fairest bidder. To palliate the villany, he told the captain, the boy was the natural son of a person of condition, but had vilely behaved, and as he deserved no regard on that score, his friends were loth to suffer disgrace by him, therefore chose to send him out of the way of temptation. Then he returns to the woman, tells her the boy was to embark forthwith for St Omers, and takes him away with him; meantime the vessel not being ready to sail, he lodges him in a private house, at his devotion, where the boy was kept concealed till things were ready for his embarkation. Soon after the baron was taken ill and died. The worthy uncle immediately took upon him the title of baron, with the estate appendant on it; the baron's sudden death is supposed to be the cause why he made no declaration in behalf of his son on his death-bed. Meanwhile the unhappy youth, now real baron, was kept too close a prisoner to hear one word about it. Being told by his uncle, that nothing should be wanting to retrieve the time he had lost, the hopes of future accomplishments gave him new life, he went on board the ship, and was easy and gay, till a storm arising, ruffled the pleasing prospect, and filled his head with all the usual terrors that attend it.

"The fears of death no doubt had such an effect on our young voyager, that, though ignorant as yet of his misfortunes, he heartily wished himself on land. Alas, he little imagined the severity of his fate was yet to come!

"The violence of the storm, which had lasted three hours, being abated, a cloth was spread in the captain's cabin, our young baron was going to place himself at the table, when one of the sailors checked him with—'Hold, youngster, do you think you are to be messmate with the captain?' This sea-jest, seconded by the loud mirth of two cabin-boys who attended, a little disconcerted our unhappy young nobleman. The captain saved him the trouble of a reply by saying, 'The boy will not choose the worst company I find, were he left to himself; but he will know his distance better hereafter.' This sarcasm plunged him into a silent confusion, during which he had the mortification to see the captain dine elegantly; after which he had his allowance of salt beef and pease given him in so coarse a manner, as might have acquainted him what he had to apprehend. He began to mutter that he thought himself ill-used, and would acquaint the baron, his father, with it, which naturally raising the curiosity of the sailors, the captain, in his own vindication, related the story as he had it from the kind uncle, by which the young baron being fully apprised of his cruel destiny, it produced so visible a despair, that the captain thought himself obliged to confine him to the hold. But he mistook the remedy; the youngster's generous spirit was not to be tamed by ill usage. A disdainful sullenness succeeded: he obstinately refused all sustenance though pressed to receive it by beating, or swallow it by force. Arguments, menaces, and stripes, were equally vain. The captain saw a necessity of changing his method, for his own interest. He sent for him into his cabin, apologized for the ill treatment he had received, as done without his warrant or privity, and assured him, when they reached the Indian continent, he would employ his good offices to place him to his liking, with other arguments to reconcile him to his captivity. But all that was urged had no effect on the young baron, till promised his case should be

represented to his father. This assurance reconciled him to life, and the captain using him kindly, to fit him for the market he designed, our young exile landed well in Pennsylvania.

"Here the captain repeating his former assurances, he was sold to a rich planter in Newcastle county, called Drummond, who immediately took him home, and entered him in the number of his slaves.

"A new world now opened to him, and being set to the felling of timber, a work no way proportioned to his strength, he did it so awkwardly that he was severely corrected. Drummond was a hard inexorable master, who, like too many of the planters, consider their slaves or servants as a different species, and use them accordingly. Our American planters are not famous for humanity, being often persons of no education, and having been formerly slaves themselves, they revenge the ill usage they received on those who fall into their hands. The condition of European servants in that climate is very wretched; their work is hard, and for the most part abroad, exposed to an unwholesome air; their diet coarse, being either poul or bread made of Indian corn, or homine or mush, which is meal of the same kind moistened with the fat of bacon; and their drink, water sweetened with a little ginger and molasses. Our young captive began to sink under his calamity, when he met with a comfortress in a female slave of near sixty, who had been perfidiously trepanned by a wicked husband, and sold to Pennsylvania. As she dressed the food for the slaves, and carried it out to the field to them, she soon took notice of him, and her pity increased on hearing a story that so nearly resembled her own. She had a good education, and was not unacquainted with history, so that her conversation afforded the young baron both consolation and instruction. She sometimes wrote short pieces of instructive history, on bits of paper, which she left with him in the field, and to look over these he often neglected his labour, regardless of the blows he knew he was to suffer, so eager he was to improve his mind. He regarded this slave as his mother, and was treated by her as a favourite child; but in four years she

died, and left him in the deepest affliction for her loss. His master's continued ill usage, and the innate aversion he had to slavery, at last determined him to endeavour to make his escape. Yet he kept this resolution to himself, having little inclination to converse with his fellow-slaves, whose manners were no way conformable to his own. However one of them, who entertained the same design, observing his melancholy, broke his intention to him, and informed him, that hearing a ship was ready to sail from Dover (a neighbouring port) to England, he resolved to take that opportunity, and invited him to partake his flight. The young baron, after some questions, agreed to the proposal, and went early to bed, in order by daybreak to put their project in execution. But what was his surprise on awaking, contrary to custom, to find the day advanced, and the family in confusion! The other slave, Jacob, had robbed his master and fled with the booty. Messengers were despatched in pursuit of him every way. How did the young baron bless his good fortune, that had saved him from such a danger, as being an innocent accomplice in Jacob's villany! He shuddered at the guilt he might have contracted by partaking in his flight. Jacob had not gone 27 miles when he was retaken with his master's effects, and brought back to receive the punishment he deserved; after which, Drummond sold him to a planter at Philadelphia, as fearing he might take his revenge for what he had suffered.

"The young baron was now seventeen, and had passed five years of the servitude for which he was sold, when, weary of the severity of his condition, in a sullen fit of despair he left the house of Drummond, resolved to suffer death rather than be brought back. Thus, armed with a hedging-bill, he set out without knowing his course, and as he was active and nimble, had got some miles before he was missed. Immediate pursuit was made after him, but to no purpose. Three days he wandered in the woods, and having but little nourishment, grew faint, when he spied a river which he took for the Delaware, but was indeed the Sasquahana, which parts Pennsylvania from the Iroquois nations. He also saw a town at some distance; but not

caring to venture near the shore, he lay down at the foot of a tree, when fortune brought him a present relief to plunge him in new distresses.

"It was now twilight, when he heard the trampling of horses at full gallop, advancing towards him, and lifting up his eyes from his covert, perceived two men well mounted, one of whom had a woman behind him, and the other a portmanteau. As these did not seem to be pursuers, his courage revived on hearing the foremost say to the woman behind him, 'Come, my dear, it is time to take some refreshment, and this is a convenient place.' With that he alighted, helped her off, and his attendant fastening the horse to a tree, took some meat out of one of his bags, and spread it on the grass, with a bottle of wine, and they all sat down to the refreshment, which our young baron would willingly have partook, if he durst. However, in peeping at them, he made a noise, that alarmed the servant, who, starting up, saw him, and cried to his master they were betrayed, at the same time striking at him with his drawn cutlass. He kneeling protested his innocence, and after repeating his story, prevailed on the master to pity his misfortunes. They now invited him to share their repast, which he thankfully accepted, after which they told him they were going to Apoquenemink to embark for Holland, and would procure him a passage with them. This happy news made him forget all he had suffered, and gave him new spirits for his journey. They remounted, and he followed on foot; but they had not gone far through the woods, when they saw by the horses and lights behind them, they were pursued. The lady gave all the signs of the utmost consternation. 'It is he, it is he himself,' she cried, 'we are lost for ever.' The approach of the pursuers gave no time for deliberation. The lady jumped off, and hid herself amongst the trees. The gentleman and his servant drew, and the baron with his hedge-bill, in gratitude thought himself bound to assist the weakest side, but the combat was unequal, and they were surrendered and taken prisoners. The lady, who had fainted, underwent the same fate, and in this manner they were conducted that night to

a village, and the next day lodged separately in Chester gaol.

"It was here, too late, the young baron was informed that the lady was the daughter of a rich merchant, who having an inclination for a young man beneath her rank, was, by her father, forced to marry against her will; but still keeping company with her first lover, (the person taken with her,) they agreed to rob her husband and leave the country, who having timely notice, had pursued them, and there was no doubt but they would suffer the rigour of the law.

"The noble slave trembled at this relation, he saw the hazard of associating himself with strangers, and yet, in the circumstances he was in, he knew not how to avoid it.

"The trial came on next morning. The lady, her lover, and servant, were condemned to die for robbery. The sentence of the young baron was respited, as he did not belong to the guilty persons; but he was remanded to prison, with orders that he should be exposed every day in the market-place to public view, and if it could be proved that he had ever been at Chester before, he should be deemed accessary to the robbery, and suffer death.

"In this suspense he remained five weeks, when some affairs of traffic brought Drummond, his old master, to Chester, who immediately reclaimed him as his property. Before his departure, our young baron was a melancholy spectator of the execution of the three criminals taken with him.

"The fruit the young baron received for this attempt was (by the laws of that country) to find the remaining two years of his servitude redoubled, and the severity of his master proportionably increased. However, upon a complaint made to the justices of that province, attended with proofs of his ill usage, his master was obliged to sell him to another; but he gained little by this alteration in his condition. He bore it notwithstanding for three years with tolerable patience, but conversing with some sailors, who were returning to Europe, it awakened all his ardour for liberty, and he resolved at any rate to venture a second escape. His design proved again abortive; he was retaken before

he could get aboard, and, though he had but one year to serve, he was condemned to suffer for five. This last disappointment, and additional bondage, quite sunk his spirits. He fell into a deep melancholy, which appeared in all his deportment; so that his new master apprehending he might lose him, began to treat him with less austerity, and recommended him to the care of his wife, who, being a woman of humanity, often took him into the house, and gave him part of such provision as they had at their own table, or, in his absence, ordered her daughter (who was called Maria) to perform the same kind offices. This young girl soon conceived a great tenderness for the young baron, and endeavoured all the ways she possibly could to relieve his sadness, which was such as gave him no room to take notice of what otherwise he must have observed. It happened she was not the only one on whom the graceful person of our noble slave had made an impression; a young Indian maid, of the Irokese nation, had distinguished him from his fellow-slaves, and as she made no secret of her affection, used to express her kindness for him, by assisting him in his daily toils, telling him, if he would marry her when his time of servitude was expired, she would work so hard for him as to save him the expense of two slaves. The young baron used all the arguments he could to persuade her to stifle a passion to which she could hope no returns. It was on one of these occasions, that Maria, his master's daughter, surprised him sitting with this Indian maid, and jealousy awakening her love, she loaded him with reproaches, and left him without allowing him to make a reply.

"Thus did our young baron in his captivity find himself the object of a passion he had no taste or inclination for himself, and studied as much to shun the caresses of his two mistresses as others would have done to return them. Unluckily Maria's impatience to see him, carried her one day to a field distant from the plantation, where she knew he worked. In her way thither, she met her rival, bent on the same design. The Indian, no longer mistress of herself, flew at her like a tigress, so that it was not without some

struggle she got out of her hands, and fled towards the place where the noble slave was employed. The Irokese finding her revenge disappointed, and perhaps dreading the consequences of the other's power and resentment for the assault, made directly to a river adjacent, and, plunging herself in, ended at once her love and her life.

"Maria, who saw this catastrophe, was brought home to the house pale and speechless; she was put immediately to bed, and when she recovered, all she could say was to repeat the name of the Indian maid with great emotion. This, joined to the account of some slaves, who had seen all that passed between them, and who were witnesses to the Indian's fate, greatly alarmed her father and mother. James only (the noble slave) guessed the real truth of the matter; and as Maria often mentioned his name, it was concluded by her parents to send him into her room under some pretence or other, and place themselves so as to hear what passed. This stratagem had the desired success. They heard their daughter express the most violent passion, which they found was no way encouraged by their slave. As they could not but entertain a just opinion of his honesty and prudence, they resolved to take no notice of what passed; but, in order to cure their daughter of her passion, it was concluded to give our young baron the liberty his late behaviour deserved. The mistress soon acquainted him with this good fortune, and he now indulged the pleasing hopes of returning to Europe, and being restored to his honour and fortune. He looked on himself as already free, when his master gave him notice he was to go with him next day to Dover; but his master, having secretly less favourable intentions, as he was very covetous, began to reflect, that five years the young baron had to serve was too much to lose; and though to his wife he pretended his intention to set him free, he secretly agreed with a planter near Chichester, in Sussex county, where, with the usual forms, he transferred or sold him for the term he had to serve.

"Never was astonishment equal to that of the noble slave, at finding the baseness and ingratitude of Drummond. He reproached him with his breach of promise; and had not

those present interposed, he had probably made him pay dear for his perfidy. His new master imagining by this conduct, that he was of a turbulent disposition, began to repent his bargain. However, as he was a generous good-natured man, he treated him mildly; so that his work was easy, and he had the privilege of a good collection of books, which was a great consolation to him. This kind usage had such an effect on his generous temper, that he resolved patiently to wait the recovery of his liberty; but unluckily his master died in three years, and the heir disposing of part of the plantation, he was sold to a new master in Newcastle county, almost within sight of Drummond's plantation. Here he was informed that Maria, his old mistress, having had a child by one of her father's white slaves, he was by the laws of the country obliged to marry her; and they were gone to settle at a distant plantation, which her father had bought for him; and what more nearly concerned him, he was told, that two brothers of Turquoise, the Indian maid (whose despair for him had occasioned her tragical death), had vowed his destruction. As he knew the desperate and revengeful temper of that nation, he was as much on his guard as possible, but all his precaution had been fruitless, if Providence had not interposed in his favour. These Indians watched him so narrowly, that they attacked him one day in the remote part of the woods, and with a knife had certainly despatched him, had not some persons, in search of a fugitive slave, at that instant come up and seized the assassins. He escaped with a slight wound in his hip, and the Indians being carried before a justice, were sentenced to pay the surgeon for his cure, and the master for the loss of time it would take up, and to give security for their good behaviour. He continued two months ill of this wound, and neither the surgeon nor master hastened the recovery, which was against both their interests. During this indisposition a new accident involved him in fresh difficulties.

" Going out one Sunday evening for the benefit of the air, he sat him down under a hedge, which parted his master's ground from that of a neighbouring planter. After he had read here a while, he found himself drowsy, and fell

asleep; and when he awoke he perceived it was dark, and heard near him the voices of two persons, which raised his curiosity. His surprise increased to find by the conversation, that his mistress was forming a plot with Stephano, their neighbour's slave, to rob her husband and go off with him for Europe in a ship he had prepared for that purpose. The noble youth was struck with horror at the discovery; for the perfidious woman, in outward appearance, seemed to live very happily with her husband, who was fond of her to excess. He resolved to prevent the villany at first, by revealing the whole to his master; but reflecting, that a woman capable of such treachery, might have art enough to make a good-natured husband believe her innocent, he resolved to try another method. He waited till the guilty pair separated, and following his mistress, hastily overtook her, and told her he was informed of all that passed. He remonstrated with her on the baseness of her designed flight, and ended with conjuring her to reflect, and change her purpose; in which case, he assured her, what had passed should remain with him for ever secret.

"The mistress, finding herself discovered, pretended a sincere repentance for her fault, which she promised him she would never repeat; adding such marks of kindness to him, as gave him too much cause to imagine her unlawful passion had changed its object.

"As the young baron could not prevail with himself to gratify the passion of his mistress, she at last considered him as a dangerous person, and endeavoured to get rid of him by poison; which, though his servitude was almost expired, determined him to make his escape. He luckily met with a ship that brought him to Jamaica, and, in September, 1740, he entered on board one of the ships of war as a common sailor; but a discovery being soon made of his birth, and several circumstances of his story remembered by some in the fleet, he was introduced to the captain, who showed him particular regard, and the admiral, commiserating his misfortunes, not only accepted of a petition for his discharge, but soon sent him to England to prosecute his claim. When he arrived, he applied himself to a gentleman who had been

an agent for the family, and it was not long before he had an opportunity of giving a strong proof of the justice of his cause.

"The woman who had nursed this unfortunate young nobleman three years, hearing of his arrival, and being desirous to see him, was introduced to another gentleman, when she said, 'You are not my boy, you are a cheat.' Afterwards she was brought into a room, in which were five or six gentlemen at a table, and one at a window looking out of it, and after viewing the former, said, 'My boy is not here, except he be at the window;' then seeing his face, she immediately cried out in great rapture, 'This is he!' and kissed him. Being asked to give a particular circumstance which might convince others that she was not deceived, she answered, that he had a scar on his thigh; for, having in his father's house seen two gentlemen learning to fence, the foils being carried away, he and his young playfellow got two swords, and went to fencing, by which he received a deep wound in the thigh. Upon examination, the scar of it was very visible."

THE QUARANTINE;

OR,

TALES OF THE LAZARETTO.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the plague made its appearance in Malta, many of the inhabitants fled from the island, and sought refuge in the ports of Sicily. The principal resort was to Messina; and the Lazaretto containing at the time an unusual number of passengers from the Levant, who had arrived with a convoy from Smyrna a few days before, a more diversified assemblage of persons has perhaps rarely been collected into so small a compass. It was in truth an epitome of the world—the riddlings of all nations; but still among them were many clever and curious adventurers, who had lived much, and seen a great deal.

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According to the quarantine regulations, the passengers by the different vessels were not permitted to come in contact with one another, but were formed into so many distinct companies. They were, however, allowed to enter into conversation; and on the afternoon of the second day after the arrival of the fugitives from Malta, as they were assembled in the burying-ground, the area of the court of the buildings, one of the ladies, the wife of an English officer, suggested that to lighten the sense of confinement, and to vary the monotony of living in a dull court, and sitting all day on graves, on account of being suspected of having imported the plague, the gentlemen should contrive some recreation of which the whole party might partake.

This suggestion was received with the utmost cordiality; and, after some further con-

sultation, it was agreed that the different companies should, from time to time, choose a person from among their respective members to entertain the whole party with the recital of some adventure, story, or song.

The diffidence of talent, and the modesty of genius, were never more conspicuous than on this occasion. Every effort of eloquence and entreaty was in vain made to procure volunteers, and much time agreeably spent during the first afternoon in banter and apologies, till the original fair author of the plan again interposed, and proposed that they should all cast lots to determine who should begin.

The propriety of this suggestion was adopted by acclamation, and the first on whom the obligation fell to amuse the company, was a person who had hitherto not been

particularly noticed; but, the moment he advanced to perform his task, every eye was directed towards him, and it was universally acknowledged that he could be no ordinary man.

In his air there was a degree of gentlemanly ease and self-possession above the condition of his appearance; and his physiognomy betokened intelligence, with a slight cast of that mild and calm expression which belongs peculiarly to the countenance of enthusiasm. He began by stating, that he was a native of Sardinia; but it will be better to give his story as nearly as possible in the style in which he told it himself.

THE

PHYSIOGNOMIST;

A BIOGRAPHICAL TALE OF THE SEVEN SENSES.

I AM a native of the district of Oliastro, *said the Sard*, the most picturesque portion of the whole island; perhaps, in the grandeur of the landscape, it is not surpassed by any region of the Alps or Appenines, and the inhabitants are a more primitive race than the peasants of Italy or of Switzerland.

Either some tradition, or accidental fancy, early led me to believe that the ancient castle of Lanzei had belonged to my ancestors,—for certainly there is no historical evidence to au-

thorise the notion;—but there has always been something inexplicable in the treatment which my relations received from their neighbours. None of the males of our family ever thought of acquiring the knowledge of any handicraft, and the females were always chosen in marriage by young men greatly superior to them in point of circumstances and connexions.

Of my father I have little to say; he died young, and I have no remembrance of his person. He has been spoken of to me as a man possessed of much goodness of heart, and of that kind of handsome appearance which is generally accompanied with a benevolent disposition. No doubt persons of that figure are induced, by the treatment they receive from others, to be more complaisant than those who are less liberally adorned by nature.

My mother was a woman endowed with a masculine understanding; and without even the elements of education, so far as such is

derived from the use of books, her mind was well disciplined, and she judged of higher matters than those of her own sphere, with a comprehension of thought that, in other circumstances, would have obtained for her great distinction. She early saw that the bias of my character would lead me to seek adventures; but she feared that my sensibility would prevent me from elbowing my way through the world with that equanimity which is more essential to success than rarer endowments. Her chief study in consequence was to strengthen my fortitude and to nourish my selfishness.

It was strange, that such a woman should have considered the inculcation of selfishness as a duty; but she perceived that the weakness, perhaps I might say the generosity, of my nature, would induce me to place implicit reliance on others;—she thought that the innate peculiarities of my character were sufficient to counteract the effects of her lessons.

My mother resided with my grandmother and another sister. They had no income but the fruits of their industry as knitters of stockings, and in this trade health was all their capital; but they were cheerful and contented, though three widows; and such was their confidence in the goodness of Providence, that even when any one of them happened to become indisposed, they felt only sympathy with the sufferer, and augmented their assiduity to make up for the deficiency occasioned by her illness.

The great and the opulent may lay claim to the virtue of munificence, but it is only the poor who can taste the luxury of giving to others in distress the hard-earned fruit that was set apart for themselves. I am not, however, one of those who look with an invidious eye towards the higher classes; on the contrary, I am both in feeling and principle an aristocrat; but my own experience has taught me, that there are pleasures in humble life

more exquisite than the utmost refinements that wealth can procure or power command.

When I was about four years old, my grandmother took me with her, on the night of a festival, to see the church of a neighbouring monastery illuminated. As we approached towards it, I was much struck with the splendid appearance of the lamps which adorned the façade; but the light which issued from the windows, dimmed by the breath of the crowd within, and the sound of the organ, and the voices of the choristers, combined to fill my young imagination with a thousand strange and wonderful conceptions, that were rather the nebulæ of poetical feelings than distinct or intelligible fancies.

From that evening I date the history of my religious sentiments; for I remember that my grandmother, as we were walking towards the church, endeavoured to give me some idea of heaven, by describing it as a place full of glory, above the skies, in which good

children walked about with branches of the palm-tree in their hands. Many a fine evening since, when the memory of the past comes in all its tenderness, do I still think, as I look to the stars sparkling above me, that they are the illuminated windows of that glorious place where I shall receive, as a little child, the renewal of those caresses with which the knowledge of immortality was first impressed upon my infantine heart.

Oliastro, as I have told you, is a mountainous region, and the youth, like the mountaineers of other countries, are necessitated to seek the means of subsistence abroad. We are all brought up with the view of entering the busy world; and many of the tales, told to the children at the cottage-doors in the evening, are biographical sketches of adventurers from Oliastro, who have acquired renown as scholars, and even eminence as lawyers, judges, and statesmen, in Lombardy. In these tales there is doubtless much fiction,

but the influence of such exaggeration is a powerful excitement to the aspiring hopes of youth.

When I had reached my thirteenth year, my mother consulted the Abbate Augustino, our village schoolmaster, as to the means of getting me into the free academy at Cagliari. I was not accounted, by that respectable ecclesiastic, a very clever lad. I did not learn my lessons well—I was shy and awkward among the other boys, and I had, in his opinion, a bad custom of asking the use of every thing I saw done or doing. He was, therefore, averse to my mother's intention of sending me to the capital, and predicted that my disagreeable way of asking questions would prevent me from making friends.

My mother, however, did not agree with the abbate; she alleged, that my inattention to my lessons did not proceed so much from inaptitude, as from the subjects of the lessons not interesting my imagination. My

aunt was also quite convinced, and locquaciously confident, that I would prove a great man. My grandmother heard all that passed, but said nothing.

The abbate was in the main an excellent creature; he not only assisted my mother with money to equip me for Cagliari, but obtained many letters for me from the friars in neighbouring convents to their relatives in the metropolis, and he gave me one from himself to a cousin of his own, a notary of great eminence, as he assured me, and who, if he could not receive me into his own house, would procure me a situation in one of the best families in all the city, where, like the other students belonging to the free college, I would be allowed board and lodgings for my assistance as a domestic.

Equipped for the journey, and my credentials prepared, I waited impatiently for the day of my departure. My grandmother exhorted me to eschew evil company; my af-

fectionate aunt was garrulous with the anticipation of the great things that awaited me; but my mother never once spoke of our separation. She treated me exactly as if nothing remarkable was to take place, but I often observed her eye suffused with tears as she looked on me; and at midnight I was more than once awakened by her coming to see me as I lay asleep. There was something indescribably sorrowful to my heart in this concealed solicitude of my mother, and even at this moment the remembrance of it draws tears into my eyes.

At length the day of my departure drew nigh; a band of travellers from Sassari were expected to pass, and I was to join them, along with some of our neighbours, who were also going to Cagliari. I scarcely closed my eyes all the preceding night; and although the travellers were not expected to pass till several hours later, we were all afoot long before the break of day. The morning was spent in my

receiving a thousand caresses and admonitions. O last happy day of my life! how beautiful the sun appeared above the mountains! how serene the tranquillity of the skies and the distant ocean! how delightful the gales, and how lovely the blossoms! Every eye dwelt on me bedewed with affection. My hopes were bright as the sunshine, and my bosom pure as the ether.

The travellers at last were seen descending the hill; the anxious ear of my mother was the first that heard them approaching. Never shall I forget the sudden burst of grief which at that moment overwhelmed us all. My poor old grandmother dropped on her knees in prayer, my aunt shouted with triumphant anticipations, while my mother caught me in her arms with a convulsive sob, and pressed me to her breast, as her tears rained upon my neck.

The heart in health and youth possesses an elastic vigour, which repels the pressure of

melancholy. I had not long bidden adieu to my friends and native cottage, when I recovered my wonted cheerfulness. On the second day we reached the metropolis, and one of the travellers, who had been so kind as to take a particular charge of me, conducted me to the office of Senor Alvaro, the eminent notary to whom the Abbate Augustino had so particularly recommended me.

As we entered the office, I presented the letter; and while the notary perused it, I attentively read his physiognomy. He was a lean sallow old man—his nose, meagre with penurious meals or assiduous study, was pinched into an edge of sharpness by his spectacles; his under-lip was contemptuously projected, and his small eyes deeply set in his head, pored with the intensity of sparks on the paper. I did not much like him; but the first effect of his meagre and acute visage was dissolved by the sound of his voice.

I have since frequently observed, that when

all the exterior signs of a benevolent disposition are wanting, nature tunes the voice so happily as to make it compensate for every other defect. It was in this manner she had treated Senor Alvaro. There was a clearness and softness in his accents, which it was impossible to hear without believing that they came from a kind and indulgent heart.

"You will go with me to my house," said he, "I am in want of a servant; the student I had left me yesterday to be a soldier. He was a bold honest youth, and I was very sorry that he went away. Come, it is almost dinner time; my housekeeper will be glad to see the place of Alphonso supplied so soon by so handsome and so modest a lad."

The house of Senor Alvaro was not far from his office. It was a mean abode, and furnished, uncouthly, with old-fashioned unmatched chairs, large chests of drawers, curiously carved cabinets, paralytic tables, and

looking-glasses irradiated with letters and papers stuck behind their frames.

We were admitted by Maddalen, the housekeeper, a ruddy round maiden of at least fifty-five. Her voice was a pleasant enough treble, and she had an innocent sly way of winking when she thought she had said any thing very sage—an error, poor soul, that she often committed—the effect of which was such, that no one could be many minutes in her company without becoming good-humoured.

Ignorant as I was of the world, I had nevertheless formed such an idea of the necessary connexion between magnificence and power, that the appearance of Senor Alvaro's house and household did not tend to inspire me with any sanguine confidence in his ability to serve me. However, he lacked not the will; and, going out immediately after dinner, when he returned in the evening, he informed me that he had made the requisite arrangements to procure me the freed

vileges of the academy; and that next morning a lad, who was domiciled in the house of an apothecary, would call to conduct me to the school, and introduce me to the masters.

After Alvaro had supped, and Maddalen and I were seated together in the kitchen, she related to me many instances of the goodness of his heart. "Nothing," said she, "but the want of application when he was young has prevented him from being one of the greatest, as he is one of the best, men in Sardinia. It is a great pity that he has not more clients; but nobody chooses to employ an honest man as a lawyer; for rogues are always best matched together, and the good without their help would have no chance."

My admission to the academy was truly an entrance upon a new course of existence. The students upon the foundation were universally lads of som[illegible] natural endowment, and they were al[illegible] ctuated by a presentiment [illegible]t. They had none of that art-

less gayety, which is seen in the leisure hours of other boys. Their school-tasks were with them the most serious business; and by the arrangements of the institution, the hours, that would have been devoted to pastimes in other seminaries, were occupied by them in performing the duty of servants in the families by whom they were entertained. They held but little connexion with each other. I can compare their constancy in their several pursuits only to those amazing Rapids in some of the American rivers, where different waters are said to run together unmingled in the same stream.

But with all that extraordinary and peculiar selfishness, there was a probity of mind and a purity of heart among those emulous students far exceeding any thing I have ever met with; and they were as tremblingly sensible to their reputation as it is possible for feminine delicacy to be.

When I went to Cagliari, I

fied to take my place in the academy among the other boys admitted at the same time; I was on that account seated apart from the class. My latent emulation was in consequence not excited, and I made so little progress, that the good Alvaro thought I would only lose my time, and acquire idle habits, were I to continue at school. His opinion in this respect greatly puzzled Maddalen, who could not conceive how a lad, tractable and delighted with her wit and stories, should be more incapable of learning than many others whom she had known. These conversations between the notary and his housekeeper became more and more frequent, and were as often terminated by him with that characteristic projection of the under-lip, which I had remarked when he perused my recommendatory letter.

After I had been about a year with him, he said to me, in a gentle and affectionate man-
are well aware, Carlos, that

Providence has not destined you to excel in learning; but you are blest with a frank and penetrating spirit, a cheerful countenance, and a warm heart, and should not therefore repine at the want of that talent which is so common among your school-fellows; for few of them possess so many agreeable qualities as yourself."

Before this conversation with my worthy master, the passion of ambition had lain asleep in my bosom. I was, however, conscious of being able to do my tasks as well as the other students; but to be thus told, that I was considered incapable of maintaining any equality with them, thrilled through my heart-strings with anguish and energy. For several minutes I sat silent, steadfastly looking in his face. His eye caught mine;—he paused in his discourse;—his under-lip beca[illegible] vehemently projected, and his countenance confused. I felt my heart growing too big for my bosom, and before he could assist me, I

fell from my seat, and lay senseless at his feet.

With the assistance of Maddalen I was soon recovered; and the moment I was able to speak, I exclaimed, that I never would again pass the threshold of the academy.

The old man sat some time thoughtful, with his eyes cast on the ground. Maddalen stood behind his chair, and with many significant winks and nods sanctioned and encouraged my resolution. After a pause of three or four minutes, Alvaro rose and left the room.

"Be a soldier," cried Maddalen, in a half-exulting whisper, as he shut the door; "I am sure you never were intended for a scholar, and I see, by the greatness of your spirit, that you will become a general if you will be advised by me."

"No, Maddalen," said I, "I will never be a soldier." How, indeed, could I respect the profession? At that time no troops in the

world could be more despicable than the garrison of Cagliari. The very names of battle and victory were almost obliterated from their vocabulary.

In the course of an hour Alvaro returned, and a smile played on the habitual pensiveness of his features. "I have good news to tell you," said he cheerfully; "a merchant from Sassari is at present in town, and wishes to take home with him a youth who has received education enough at the free academy to be a clerk. You are perfectly well qualified for the situation; and I have recommended you to him as a man should recommend a lad in whose good dispositions he can place implicit confidence."

I need not inform you, that I eagerly embraced this fortunate accident, and next morning the worthy notary carried me to the inn where Don Lopez the merchant lodged. He was at breakfast when we entered the room. His face was round, ruddy, and

cheerful; and his table presented a scene of opulence in viands such as I had never before witnessed. But, notwithstanding all those assurances of a comfortable apprenticeship, there was a disagreeable degree of pomposity in the manners of Don Lopez, which repressed the sentiments that the openness of his countenance seemed at the first glance calculated to inspire.

Don Lopez was one of that class of persons, who, without the smallest particle of generous sentiment in their composition, are constrained, by the impulse of circumstances, to act in all affairs with unvaried frankness, and the appearance of possessing a munificent heart. In every thing the selfishness of his nature was visible. He studied the indulgence of his palate with the solicitude of devotion; but, as he delighted as much in cheerful company as in luxurious dishes and delicate wines, he drew around his table a circle of pleasant companions, and had the reputation of being

liberal. He was proud and vain to an excessive degree; and yet such was his happy fortune, that neither of these disagreeable qualities were allowed to show themselves in their true colours. Not one of his associates were ignorant of his natural character, and yet they treated him as one of the best of men, and always spoke of his peculiarities and faults with indulgence. Not one of them had the slightest faith in his friendship, and yet he was the most intimate friend with which each of them respectively associated.

By the time that Don Lopez had finished his business in Cagliari, Alvaro had procured the means to equip me in a handsome manner to accompany him to Sassari. In the course of our journey we met with nothing remarkable.

My engagement with Don Lopez, which was for five years, I resolved to fulfil with scrupulous fidelity; but, instead of cultivating the acquaintance of the other mer-

cantile clerks, I devoted my leisure to the acquisition of knowledge. My studies were as various as the books I could obtain; and though nothing could be more desultory than the course of my reading, still it was regulated by something like a principle, and I went forward in the acquisition of information like a stream towards the sea, gradually expanding and deepening as it flows. The only class of my studies which had the slightest character of regularity was my attention to foreign languages. But the pursuit was subordinate to the thirst of knowledge, and, therefore, although I made a respectable proficiency in the principal tongues of Europe, I never attained excellence in any of them.

When I had been about three years at Sassari, the lad, whom I mentioned as having introduced me to the master of the academy at Cagliari, and who at the time was residing with an apothecary, came to settle there in that profession. His name was Vincellos,

and had he lived, he might perhaps have acquired some distinction as a professor of chemistry, for the experiments of which he possessed much dexterity and patience. At his shop I formed an acquaintance with Gabellini, who is now so celebrated as a lecturer at Padua. He was then a young man, possessed of much various learning, but formal in his manners and negligent in his dress; and, with the utmost gentleness, candour, and modesty, he was the most subtle and arrogant of mankind. He was however no hypocrite, but freely and manfully maintained his opinions whenever they were controverted. With him, and two or three other young men, we held every evening a conversation in the shop of Vincellos, where Gabellini was ever the most distinguished; but his opinions were seldom able to stand the test of the correct judgment of Vincellos; and his knowledge, though deeper than mine, was neither so general nor so curious, and we had, in conse-

quence, many controversies that sometimes mortified his self-conceit.

My conversational powers were sharpened by these controversies, and I learned the way to manage an argument without losing my temper. But of what avail were such acquirements to one of my condition? In that lies the moral of my story. Knowledge is wealth, and if you can afford to wait for an opportunity to turn it to account, it will never fail to repay the care and the labour with which it has been obtained.

Soon after the expiration of my engagement with Don Lopez, Count Waltzerstein, a German nobleman, came from Cagliari to Sassari for the purpose of taking his passage to Leghorn. Don Lopez was his banker, and I saw him, in consequence, often. From the moment he had delivered his letters of credit, I had formed a wish to go with him to the continent; and, with this view, I endeavoured to conciliate his good opinion. He

was not, however, one of those kind of persons with whom it is easy to excite any interest. His mind was tardy and indecisive, and there was a morbid irritability about him, the consequence of physical infirmity, that frequently frustrated the best attempts to please him.

But that which, more than any other cause, rendered his friendship exceedingly difficult of attainment, was the exquisite delicacy of his taste in every thing but the expression of his own feelings. He was, perhaps, not more than thirty, but ill health gave him the appearance of being considerably older. He was rather below the middle stature His complexion was fair, and the cast of his physiognomy mild and interesting; but there was a want of that harmony in the parts of his figure, which is always found connected with a consistent character.

I have rarely met with a man to whom the epithet of accomplished could be more strict-

ly or properly applied. He had not one spark of original genius. He could not place two words together, for which he might not have been able to quote an authority; and the slightest modification of original metaphor or fancy was beyond all the faculties of his mind to form; and yet the most ingenious poet, in the happiest moment of inspiration, never surpassed the occasional sallies of Count Waltzerstein. In every company where he chose to unbend he led the conversation, and astonished and delighted his auditors. His proficiency in music was wonderful; the violin was a living intelligence in his hands, and he could draw from it the whole pathos and spirit of the finest composers; but he could not himself connect a single bar of melody. He read and spoke every polished modern language with admirable propriety. But I am wrong in saying he had no genius, for, unquestionably, he was endowed with the most delicate perception of whatever is ele-

gant in art and refined in manners and literature. Yet, notwithstanding all these accomplishments, Count Waltzerstein was, in his own person and manners, remarkably offensive. He declared his dislike, on the most trivial occasions, with such a vehemence of expression and distortion of features, that only feelings of the greatest abhorrence could have justified. If a dish at table was not exactly according to his taste, he would push it from him with the horror of such disgust as the smell of corruption and the sight of rottenness might excite. But, except in this odious peculiarity, he was altogether a thing made up of art—an automaton. He had been early taught to cull the happiest and most brilliant phrases for exhibition in conversation;—he held his time divided into certain invariable portions, to each of which was allotted a particular study, or the retouching of the faded points of recollection; and the evening was hallowed and set apart, for dis-

playing the intellectual full dress with which he had been engaged in adorning himself all the day.

All my endeavours to obtain any interest in the good-will of the Count would have proved useless, but for one of those curious turns in trifling things, which show us the massive strength of the chain of destiny with which we are all bound. Elegant and accomplished as he undoubtedly was, he possessed no knowledge of accounts; and, in settling his affairs with Don Lopez, he showed himself so strangely ignorant of this very necessary and ordinary kind of knowledge, that he appeared exceedingly mortified. He had heard me express a wish to go to the continent; he had seen me expert in common arithmetic, and to make himself in some degree acquainted with figures, he invited me to accompany him.

We left Sassari early in the morning, on the festival of St Nicholas, to embark at a

village a few miles distant from the city, where a vessel, loaded with wine and grain, belonging to Don Lopez, was waiting for a favourable wind to sail for Leghorn. On our arrival, we found the vessel had weighed anchor, and was underweigh. The Count hired a boat to follow her, and we proceeded to sea. The vessel caught a favourable breeze, and left us farther and farther behind.

By this time the afternoon was far advanced; the Magdalene islands lay bright around us, and the mountains of Corsica appeared nearer than those of Sardinia.

"We will not return to Sassari," said the Count, when he had made up his mind to relinquish the pursuit of the vessel. "Let us examine these islands, which are but seldom visited, and, when a favourable opportunity presents itself, we shall go to Corsica."

We accordingly made for the only one of the cluster that is inhabited. The population does not exceed a thousand, chiefly Corsicans,

who emigrated after the unsuccessful exploits of Paoli.

The whole surface of the island is incrusted with masses of rocks, covered with the orchilla weed; and the country has such an appearance of devastation, that I can compare it to nothing but a portion of the fragments of a broken-up world.

The little village to which our boatmen conducted us is the only town on the island. It was almost sunset when we landed. The Count was fatigued with the anxiety of the day and the disappointment which he had suffered. One of the boatmen stepped on before to the town, and secured lodgings for us in one of the best cottages; and the Count, on reaching it, resolved to go to bed.

By some unaccountable sympathy, which I had never before experienced, I was seized, immediately on setting my foot on the shore, with a kind of superstitious dread so truly awful, that no words can convey any notion

of what I felt; and yet there was nothing in the appearance of the place to justify the indulgence of any fear. The sky at the time was as clear as crystal, and the sea as bright and calm as quicksilver;—the sun hung upon the verge of the horizon, and the boats were drawn close to the water's edge, preparatory to being launched after vespers. It was the moment when the labour of the landsman is on the point of terminating, and the hazards of the smuggler and the fisherman are almost to commence. The women stood at their doors without their distaffs, and the children were wondering at their own shadows lengthening as the sun declined.

The cottage in which we were to take up our abode, was recommended by an appearance of more industry among the inmates than any other in the place. The front of the house was attractively white-washed;—several articles for sale hung at the window,

and on each side of the door stood casks of tunny-fish, caviar, and olives.

The island is inhabited chiefly by Corsican exiles and emigrants. Their way of life at the period of our visit was bold, restless, and piratical. Their leaders had borne a distinguished part in the patriotic exertions of Paoli:—they had descended from their ancient castles with a sounding tread and a lordly spirit. The failure of his enterprise scattered them and their followers. Some sought an asylum among rocks, and forests, and inaccessible fastnesses, and were necessitated to turn the swords which they had drawn to vindicate the liberties of their country against their earliest friends and fellow-patriots for support. The eyes of history will never discover the atrocities that were then perpetrated in the woods and caverns of Corsica. Hundreds perished of hunger in the recesses of the mountains, and when the pea-

sants yet happen to find a skeleton, they mourn as they commit it to the earth, and remember that their country was once animated with the spirit of freedom.

At the period of my visit to Maddalena with Count Waltzerstein, the troubled temper of the first refugees had subsided, and a sterner energy had succeeded to the zeal of patriotic enthusiasm. They treated the stranger with military frankness, and with hospitality, but among themselves acknowledge the restraint of no law;—they were felons and criminals in action, desire, and practice; but still their former habits lent an air of dignity to their manners, and depravity was so universal, that it produced no feeling of repugnance among them to the greatest offenders.

When the Count had retired to rest, I went and sat down on a bench opposite to a cottage. By this time the twilight had almost

faded from the sky; the breeze rose with fresh and delightful blandishments, and the stars sparkled as they shone out with extraordinary brilliancy.

While I was enjoying the freshness of the air and the beauty of the heavens, I heard, at some distance on the shore, the sound of a flageolet played with exquisite sweetness and skill. I rose, and walked towards the spot whence the sound proceeded; but I had not advanced above a hundred yards, when I found myself bewildered among the masses of rock; and I sat down on a stone, content to listen to the melody which, wild and pathetic, came like the voice of an enchantress through the silence of the night.

The fancy unconsciously endeavours, in such situations, to form an image for itself to contemplate, and the character of the music led me to think, that the musician could be no other than some elegant youth fallen from the

fortunes of his fathers, and languishing over the recollection of departed hopes of glory and renown.

While I was thus busy giving figure and features to this creation, the flageolet stopped suddenly, as if interrupted, and I heard a man hoarsely call from a short distance towards the musician. The voice that replied was clear and masculine, and appropriate to the image I had formed in my fancy. Almost in the same moment, I heard the rustle of some one passing near me, and on turning round, I saw a female form, within a few yards of the stone on which I was sitting, stoop to conceal herself.

The intruder approached close to the musician. I was not near enough to hear distinctly what passed, but there was a menace in the accents of the one, and subdued energy of remonstrance in those of the other. It was a father and son.

Their altercation continued about ten mi-

nutes, and was ended by the old man calling with a deep and angry tone on Agatha, his daughter, to come to him. She rose from her hiding-place and went towards him. A wild and piercing shriek announced that she had received a wound. A profound silence followed, and I heard something heavy plunged into the sea, which dashed against the rocks in a succession of low and sullen sounds.—I shuddered; no other sound arose but that of retiring footseps, for the undulations of the sea were all soon as hushed as oblivion.

The dawn of the morn now began to appear in the east. After waiting a few minutes, in a strange and indescribable state of mind approaching to horror, I returned to the cottage, unaccountably agitated with vague and hideous imaginings. The wild note of that shriek thrilled in my ear. The silence that followed was so hollow and inexplicable, that I could only ascribe it to mystery and guilt,

while the dash of the water seemed expressive of some mournful acquiescence of Nature to the performance of a dreadful rite.

When I entered the cottage, Count Waltzerstein had risen, and supper was ready. He chided me for venturing out so late; but observing me pale and disturbed, he checked himself, and inquired if I was unwell. I had not courage to disclose to him the singular apprehension with which I had been seized, and I allowed him to think me really ill, by declining to eat.

While we were sitting at table one of the Corsican exiles entered the shop, and inquired, in the same hoarse accents which interrupted the music, for an article he wished to purchase. The lamp on our table shone full on his face, and he stood nearly opposite to me. He appeared to be about sixty years of age. His figure was naturally majestic, and it was rather crushed than decayed. His physiognomy was at once grim and sorrowful. He

wore a red Barbaresque night-cap, and his flowing grey hair, hoary moustachios and eye-brows,—the colour of his cap, and the dark bronze of his complexion, gave him a super-natural, a demoniacal appearance. He look-ed older than human nature ever attains with the possession of so much strength, and some-thing wilder and worse than man.

The Count was greatly struck with his figure, and in a whisper, bade me look at him.

The Corsican overheard him, but without perhaps knowing what he said, and turned fiercely towards me. His eye caught mine. I thought of the frightful shriek, and the more tremendous silence, and he withdrew his eye, abashed and confounded. In a moment after, he looked at me again, with an expression of such helpless grief, that my heart dissolved within me. A slight gleam of surprise, pro-bably occasioned by my sympathy, wavered over his features, and without taking the

article he had come to purchase, he abruptly left the shop.

The moment he retired, Count Waltzerstein compared him to Thor, the Scandinavian god of vengeance, and entered into a description of the apparition so erudite and curious, that it would have passed for a masterpiece of genius in half the colleges and academies of Christendom.

"Yes, Senor," said our landlord, "Baron Altarbro is a nobleman of an ancient and brave blood; but, like many other gallant chiefs, he is destined to pine like a felon in this miserable islet."

"Has he any family?" said I abruptly.

"He has a son and a daughter," replied the landlord, "and he is the most unfortunate of fathers."

"It is certainly," said the Count, "a great misfortune to a nobleman, in his venerable years, to see his children outcasts from their

country, and denied the homage due to their birth."

"That is but his common misfortune; there are many others as wretched in that respect as he is," rejoined the landlord. But at that moment my tremor and horror increased to such a pitch, that I could not support myself at the table. The landlord happened to notice me, and stopped to offer me assistance. The Count ran to his trunk for a bottle of cordials, believing me very ill. After tasting it, I went to bed, but I found it impossible to compose myself to sleep; when my eyes would have closed, my imagination grew more awake, and kept me in a state of restless ecstacy.

As soon as the daylight began to dawn, I quitted my bed, and, attracted by a kind of hideous fascination, walked towards the spot where I had stopped to listen to the music. I could not, however, again trace the path, but on the ledge of a rock which overhung

the waves, I saw the flageolet lying in a pool of scattered and clotted blood.

When I returned to the village, the Count was up, and irritably impatient to quit the island, for he too had passed an uncomfortable night, and our luggage was already embarked. On my inquiring for the Baron Altarbro, the landlord told me, that he had gone early that morning to one of the neighbouring islands; and before I had time to ask a second question, the Count hurried me into the boat.

"What a dismal place this is!" said he, as I sat down beside him. "I am glad we are safe out of it."

"Has any thing unpleasant happened?"

"No," was his reply; "but I have been so low-spirited, that I believe there is some malignant demon in the air that puts bad thoughts into one's head. I have had such frightful dreams."

"Perhaps," said I, scarcely aware of what I said, "dreams may be owing to something

in the state of the atmosphere." The Count's eyes glittered with delight at the observation, and he related an interesting story, how a relation of his family, travelling in the Tyrol, once happened to stop at an obscure inn on the road, when he and two of his suite, who slept in the same apartment, dreamt that they were confined in an unwholesome sepulchre; and in the morning they learnt, with superstitious awe, that the landlady had died the preceding day, and that the corpse lay in an adjoining room,—a proof, said the Count, that dreams, if they do not come from the air, are affected by something in it; for it was no doubt the ammonia of the dead body floating in the atmosphere of their apartment which occasioned the similarity of their dreams.

This observation was somewhat curious; and I could not help saying,—"But what could occasion the peculiar oppression of our spirits in the island of Maddalena?"

"Some sympathy," said the Count, "doubtless of the same kind, if we could only know what was done there last night. I should not wonder if some terrible crime has been committed."

In this sort of conversation, both deeply affected from some unexplained cause, we sailed towards Porto Vecchio in Corsica. There was no wind, and the men began to sing as they rowed along the shore, actuated by the same spirit of gladness which inspires the songs of the early birds, and stirs the perfumes in the bosom of the opening flower. Their cheerfulness soon dissipated our melancholy. Indeed it was impossible to resist the blandishments with which nature, in that lovely morning, wooed the heart to rejoice. Every creature and every object seemed to have confidence in one another. The rocks appeared to brighten as they contemplated their dark foreheads in the mirror of the smooth sea; and the butterflies, that delight only in rural

and inland scenery, ventured far along its glassy surface; even the very water seemed to be touched with sentiment, and sparkled beneath the activity of the oars with something more of gayety than the mere reflection of the sunshine.

The sun had set before we entered the bay of Porto Vecchio, and by the time we reached the shore, the twilight had entirely faded from behind the mountains. Count Waltzerstein, having visited the town before, was known to the Spanish consul, who invited him to remain at his house. Next morning, the captain of an English frigate, which happened to come in during the course of the night, having some business with the consul, called while the Count was present, and understanding he was going to Italy, offered him a passage with his suite to Naples; and, as it was of little consequence to him on what part of the Italian shore he was landed, he accepted the invitation. Accordingly we em-

barked on board the frigate in the course of the day, and soon after sailed for Naples.

The evening after we left Corsica was serene and beautiful, a gentle breeze rippled the surface of the sea so softly, that it seemed rather to multiply the reflection of the stars, than to disturb the deep tranquillity of the waters.

I was standing on the quarter-deck with the captain of the frigate, conversing on the peculiarities of the English nation, when one of the sailors had occasion to pass near us. As if by the power of some inscrutable magnet, I felt at the same instant all my thoughts suddenly agitated, and the captain, without adverting to what had been the subject of our conversation, said abruptly—

"What a miserable place the island of Maddalena is!"

He then informed me, that his boat had been there on the evening preceding the arrival of the frigate at Porto Vecchio, and

had brought on board the young man who had just then passed us. At that moment, the captain had occasion to step a few paces from me to give some instructions to one of the officers, by which our conversation was interrupted; and before he returned, supper was announced.

While we were below in the cabin, the breeze freshened, and the ship moved through the water, rolling before the wind with such velocity, that I was obliged to quit the supper-table. The rushing of the water—the booming of the wind—the creaking of the furniture—and, above all, the low mournful sound of the bell as the ship occasionally plunged into the hollow of the sea, drove every thought away, and left me in a state of solemn awe, and thrilled with indescribable dread. I lay in this half-entranced condition till the frigate anchored in the bay of Naples.

The Neapolitan capital was then the most agreeable in the world to a man of Count

Waltzerstein's habits; and his rank and accomplishments made him an acceptable guest at every party. One evening, after we had spent the day at the Imperial ambassador's, that minister invited us to go with him and a young Englishman to the Opera Buffa, the most elegant theatrical entertainment of which all Italy could then boast. A new piece was performed; the music was exquisite, and every thing went off divinely.

Like the rest of the company, I was ravished with delight, and turned to the Englishman to express what I felt. But, to my astonishment, he appeared in the utmost negligence of apathy. His eyes were loose and wandering, and the general relaxation of all the muscles of his face indicated the greatest insensibility to the performance. From that moment the piece became as indifferent to me as it was to him, and I watched every movement of his eye with the keenest scrutiny; for it appeared to me that his apathy was

the effect of some extraordinary cause. At last his eye caught a stranger who entered one of the opposite boxes; and in an instant, as if touched by some Promethean energy, the inertness of his mind ceased, and started up, as it were into his eyes, with animation of alarm. This change was in a moment succeeded by another still more interesting, and he sat the very image of grief sinking into despair.

Soon after he rose and left the box, and presently I saw him enter the pit, and approach as near as he could to the box in the front of which the stranger was seated. When he had looked at him for about a minute, he immediately left the theatre, and in less than half an hour a message was brought to the ambassador, that he had shot himself!

This event excited the greatest consternation. No one could account for the crime. What rendered it the more interesting to me was, on learning from the stranger, whom I

soon after met in company, that he did not know his unfortunate countryman. I was nevertheless, however, persuaded that the appearance of the stranger had occasioned the catastrophe, and I could not rest until I had endeavoured to discover the truth.

After several weeks of restless conjecture and vigilant observation, I began to give way to the common opinion, and to account for the desperate act, by ascribing it to madness, when one morning, on passing the mole, I happened to meet a party of convicts in chains marching to their labour. The physiognomy of one of them struck me as bearing a strong resemblance to that of the suicide; and, upon closer inspection, I perceived, that not only his face, but the general outline of his person was singularly similar.

I had often before this remarked, that the minds of persons who resembled each other are much alike, and, reflecting on the appearance of the convict and the inexplica-

ble suicide, I resolved to carry the stranger, whom I suspected as having some unconscious influence over the event of his death, to the mole on the following day. The effect was as I had in some degree anticipated. In passing, the stranger looked at the convict with a slight expression of reminiscence in his countenance, and, soon after adverting to the resemblance, told me of a very extraordinary transaction which he had frustrated at Paris, and in which one of the guilty parties bore a striking resemblance to the felon.

I am sure it was doing no injustice to the deceased, to suspect that he was the individual alluded to; but the most surprising circumstance in this anecdote was, that the felon had been convicted of being engaged in a similar fraud.

After remaining nearly twelve months at Naples, the Count received letters from his father recalling him to Germany, and we set out for Rome. During the early stages of

our journey, I paid but little attention to the various objects that usually interest travellers; and we had reached the borders of the Pontine marshes before I was aware that we had entered the papal territory. It was in the morning we passed those dreaded regions of agues and death. It was also the spring, and every thing in nature that could inspire cheerfulness presented itself to the eye. The flowers sprinkled with dew, and the bright verdure, with which the ground was overspread, seemed of an elysian beauty and freshness; but not the chirp of a single bird, nor the hum of an insect, was heard; a few dumb butterflies here and there glided by, and as we advanced, even they disappeared, and all was silent.

About the fourth hour after mid-day we arrived in Rome. The heat was excessive, and my spirits were languid; in consequence of which, the celebrated objects, which travellers regard with so much interest as they

approach the everlasting city, lost on me their wonted influence. In a state of drowsy abstraction I reached the house where lodgings had been previously engaged for us, without recollecting whether I had observed even the dome of St Peter's. The Count went immediately to bed, but I was induced to accept of some refreshments which the servants offered.

The fatigue of the journey, the heat of the day, and the repast I had made, overwhelmed me with sleep. I leant back on the sofa, and, unconscious of having closed my eyes, I saw the Count enter and seat himself opposite to me at the table between us. His countenance was cadaverously ghastly. He filled a glass of wine; but, in raising it to his lips, it fell from his hand, and the wine flowed along the floor. He looked as if he expected me to assist him, but I felt myself strangely unable. In this juncture a wild cry startled me, and I perceived that I had only been dreaming,

—the Count was not in the room, nor any wine on the floor.

The cry continued, and the noise and confusion in the house led me to inquire what was the matter. On opening the door for the purpose, I found our servants in the passage, who, immediately on seeing me, exclaimed, with one voice, "The Count is dead!"

It was even so: he had expired during the time I was asleep. Such apparitional coincidences are, I believe, not uncommon, and those who have a superstitious faith in them, would rather ascribe them to supernatural agency than to any physical impression on the senses, or to moral sympathy of any kind.

The preparations in the course of the evening for the Count's funeral, which the heat of the weather rendered immediately necessary, absorbed my whole mind, and prevented me from adverting to the forlorn condition into which the event had cast me.—

I was an utter stranger in Rome, and all the money I possessed would not suffice for a week's expenditure. At night, when I had leisure to reflect on this, my spirits failed; my pillow burned beneath my head with anxiety, and I devised a thousand impracticable schemes to redeem myself from the thraldom of poverty; but I was locked fast in the skeleton-embraces of the fiend.

The weather was extremely warm, and the air was heavy and stifling. The influence of night and the presence of death are apt to put ill thoughts into men's minds. The murmur of my restlessness had been overheard by the domestics who watched the corpse. They took it into their heads that the Count had died of poison; they recollected some trifling dispute which I had with him on the road; they ascribed my lethargy, in the latter part of the journey, to the morose musings of revenge; in a word, they concluded that I had poisoned their master.

The first conception of this atrocious fancy startled them; they raised the whole house; they declared their suspicions; surgeons were sent for; the door of my chamber, in the same instant, was forced with a heavy beam, as if it had been doubly fortified within; and, before I had time to utter a word, they seized me, and bound my hands behind. The confusion increased; the rumour of the murder reached the street, and the house was soon filled with the multitude.

In the meantime, conscious of my innocence, I preserved myself calm, but my equanimity was construed against me. At last the surgeons came, and the body was opened, and a quantity of mineral poison was found in the stomach. A horrible growl of rage was muttered by all present against me, as the police officers dragged me to prison; but I was neither agitated with dread, depressed with shame, nor affected with sorrow. I have rarely felt more self-possessed than when the

jailer left me alone in the dungeon. I was in that high state of excitement, of which some men are conscious when they act their part well in difficult circumstances, or find that they have reached the extremity of their fortunes.

The first reflection that occurred to me was, that the Count had committed suicide; but a moment's consideration convinced me that such a notion was most improbable. One of the officers, while I was considering this idea, returned to inform me that I was to be examined at an early hour in the morning.

"It will be but a short business," said he, "for a quantity of the same poison found in the stomach has been discovered in your trunk."

I was thunderstruck; and the officer seeing my consternation, regarded it as the confusion of guilt. But, without noticing the insolence of his exultation, I sat down on the floor, and steadily endeavoured to recollect

which of the servants was likely to have stolen the poison, a particular preparation of antimony, that I had some time before purchased for a chemical experiment. And I remembered that, on the evening prior to our departure from Naples, the phial in which it was contained had been left on the dressing-table in my bed-room. It must then have been taken away, for my trunk was not opened after I had packed up that phial.

Failing to recollect any circumstance to attach suspicion to any particular individual, I had recourse to the unjustifiable alternative of conjecturing which of the servants was constitutionally most likely to have perpetrated the deed, and the idea of the Count's valet came frequently across my mind, in spite, as it were, of reason. Yet he was a young man of a singularly mild and agreeable physiognomy; of a disposition alert to serve, and altogether so different in countenance and conduct from the dark characteristics of a se-

cret murderer, that I ought not to have suspected him. Nevertheless, his image so frequently recurred upon me, that it took possession of my mind.

Notwithstanding his prepossessing physiognomy, I then began to think that he was taciturn and unsocial, and that there was often a degree of embarrassment in his eye, which a stranger would have ascribed to diffidence; but which was never accompanied with the slightest confusion in the performance of any matter in which he, at the time, happened to be engaged. That peculiarity, I then recollected, had very forcibly struck me when I first saw him, and, at the time, I attributed it to the consciousness of having committed some fault; but the habit of daily intercourse wore away the first impression, and reconciled me to the secret perplexity of his look.

The whole night was spent in this course of intense meditation, till I became persuaded

that Antonio (for so he was called) had committed the murder. But scarcely had I come to this conclusion, when, with one of the other servants, he was admitted into the dungeon.

His appearance acted upon me with the electricity of an insult. I leapt from the ground on which I had been sitting, and, in an agony of rage and rapture, I grasped him by the throat, exclaiming, "Wretch! what is this that you have done?"

His complexion, naturally pale, became of a gangrenous yellow, and, before I could master myself, he fainted. In the course of a few minutes, however, he recovered, and, to the utter amazement of his companion, confessed his guilt.

It is impossible to describe the tumult of feelings with which this disclosure shook me. I embraced the mysterious felon with an emotion like gratitude for having redeemed me from an ignominious death. The noise brought

in the jailer and several of his officers, to whom the discovery was announced; indeed, the appearance of the assassin was almost sufficient of itself to attest the confession he had made; for he sat on the floor, leaning against the wall, with his head drooping on his breast, and his arms hanging listless.

The dungeon in which we then were belonged to one of the guard-houses of the Inquisition; and after Antonio had repeated his confession, the officers did not think it necessary to detain me; accordingly I returned to the hotel, and, exhausted by the intensity of my reflection, I felt myself so much fatigued that I went to bed, and slept upwards of twelve hours. Meanwhile Antonio had been carried before the tribunal, and having again acknowledged that he had administered the poison, was condemned to be executed next day.

This information, which I received on awakening, induced me to hasten to his pris-

on. On approaching the door, a friar of a venerable aspect came out of the condemned cell. He held in his hand a lamp, which, flaring on his face, showed that he was profoundly affected by the result of his interview with the criminal. I bowed to him as he silently passed, and the jailer, who was at my side, said, "He must have received some terrible confession; for, although he has attended the worst criminals, I never saw him so affected before."

On entering the cell I beheld, with astonishment, Antonio seated on the ground, bearing the same mild and prepossessing countenance, and contentedly eating his supper. In that same easy, comfortable state, he had laid open the dreadful secrets of his conscience to the friar.

I sat down opposite to him under a grated aperture in the wall, which admitted light. The setting sun shone horizontally into the dungeon, and the beams tinted the head of

the criminal in such a manner as to give to his flat sweaty hair (for such it was) the appearance of glistening with supernatural fire. His complexion was colourless, and his eyes dull and glassy.

"In the name of Heaven," said I, "what tempted you to poison the Count?"

He laid down a piece of bread, which he was in the act of raising towards his mouth, and laying the back of his right hand on his knee, placed his left in its place with a sort of emphatic negligence.

"Did you never feel yourself," said he, "inclined to do any thing which you could not account for? Unless you have experienced that feeling, I can give you no explanation, nor why I feel no sorrow for what I have done."

"Is this your first crime, Antonio?"

"It is the only murder that I have committed," said he, looking at me with a smile expressive of the remembrance of enjoyment;

"and," he added—"I have long desired to gratify myself in that way."

I sickened with horror at the manner and the expression of the demoniacal sentiment, and could not continue the conversation.

On the following morning he was executed pursuant to his sentence, and I left Rome with Mr Milfort, an English gentleman whom I had become acquainted with at Naples; and who, on hearing of Count Waltzerstein's death, and the helpless condition into which I had been thrown, invited me to accompany him to Vienna. There I found the Count's father, who treated me with much kindness, and afterwards recommended me to the service of the Imperial minister, who, on the same day I was introduced to him, desired me to prepare for a journey with despatches.

"You will take this note," said his excellency, "to the Sicilian ambassador, who will give you the necessary instructions; and

when you have received his despatches, return to me."

The Sicilian ambassador, when I presented the note, examined me closely, as if to ascertain that I was really the person described in it. At least he seemed, while perusing it, as if he compared my appearance with a description. Having satisfied himself of my identity, he gave me three letters, with which he requested me to proceed to Turin. "You will, however, observe," said he, "that two of them are for other places: one of these you will put into the post-office of the first town where you can do it unobserved; and the other, farther on in your journey, you will dispose of in a similar manner."

On returning to the residence of the Imperial minister, one of the servants, a Frenchman, met me in the hall, and said, that his master having gone to the theatre, requested me to leave the despatches on the table, and follow him thither.

This message was delivered in so disengaged a manner, that I was thrown off my guard, and was on the point of giving him the despatches to place on the table, when I happened to notice, as I was in the act of taking them from my pocket, that his eyes sparkled with avidity. Suspicion of some deception flashed across my mind, and I hesitated. He looked earnestly at me, and something like apprehension disturbed his confidence. This confirmed my suspicion, and I determined to discover his perfidy.

I put the letters into his hands, and immediately went away, on the pretence of going to his master. Instead, however, of proceeding to the theatre, I lingered in the street, and then suddenly returned to the house. I was admitted by the porter. Without saying a word, I walked directly into the minister's closet; and entering abruptly, found the spy with one of the letters open. He leapt up, and in an instant escaped.

Almost a stranger in the house, and uncertain whether his perfidy was for the service of his master or for any other, I stopped, confounded by the verification of my suspicion, at a loss what to do. In this dilemma, something which he had dropped in his flight caught my eye. It was an impression on paste of the arms with which the letters were sealed.

After considering with myself, I resolved forthwith to make the minister acquainted with the discovery; and accordingly, without saying a word in the house, I went to the theatre. His excellency, on seeing me enter his box, tacitly signified to me to come close behind him. I whispered to him that I had received the despatches from the Sicilian minister; but that I had made an alarming discovery, and begged he would step out with me, that I might tell him what had happened. "Impossible!" said he, "the emperor is here, and were I to leave my box with you,

an entire stranger, a thousand surmises would be the consequence. What have you discovered?"

I related to him the incident, and showed the paste-impression of the seal. He heard me without emotion; but when I had concluded, he appeared thoughtful for a few seconds. He then requested to look at the letters, and observing the one which had been opened, his countenance became overcast.

"There is no help for it now;" he, however, said more briskly—"You must still proceed on your journey as if nothing had happened. But instead of going to Turin, as you will find among your passports one to enable you to go to Paris, make all the haste you possibly can to that capital; and upon communicating what you have discovered to the Imperial minister there, he will find employment more suitable to your sagacity.

"On my arrival at Paris, the Imperial minister applauded me greatly for the discretion

I had shown, and promised to employ me on a confidential mission; but when I saw him next day, his countenance was troubled, and he informed me, that the business, in which he thought of availing himself of my services, was necessarily postponed. In the course of the week, rumours began to prevail at Paris, that a new war with the emperor was inevitable. No one could tell the reason or the cause; but the fact was soon established by the Imperial embassy quitting Paris; and I was left behind as a thing of no value.

For several days the forlorn feeling of being friendless in a populous city depressed my spirits; but I was young, and the gayety of the town soon lightened the depression. I went to the theatres and other places of amusement; at first from curiosity, and afterwards to see if chance would throw me in the way of any acquaintance, for the new war had brought many travellers from all parts into Paris. In this pursuit, however, I be-

came weary, and, instead of going to public places, I spent my evenings in a small quiet coffee-house, which was chiefly frequented by Italian officers in the French service.

One night, while I was sitting alone in the room, a stranger, in the uniform of the army of the Cisalpine republic, came in. He was a fine manly figure, of a noble cast of countenance, and in his whole air and deportment there was a Roman dignity that could not be seen without admiration. But he had not been above a minute or two in the room, when I felt myself fearfully affected, and the whole incident that had so powerfully agitated me in the island of Maddalena burst upon my mind. In the same moment the stranger began to hum the identical air which I had heard so exquisitely played on the flageolet. Suddenly he paused, and shuddered as with the emotion of some terrible recollection. I rose and went towards him, and, without being able to tell wherefore, said—

"Do not you come from the island of Maddalena?"

The look he gave me was terrific; but, subduing his feelings, he replied—

"No; I am a Corsican; but why do you ask if I am of Maddalena?"

I then requested him to sit down with me; and I began to recount to him the story which I have already told you, when he abruptly started up and quitted the room. I could be under no mistake,—he was undoubtedly the son of the old and unfortunate baron.

Soon after this curious rencontre, I resolved to leave Paris and return to Italy. Of the money which I had received at Vienna for the journey, and a liberal present from the father of Count Waltzerstein, a considerable sum remained, but it could not last for ever; and in Paris I had no friends, while in Naples I was known to many persons who could assist me to obtain employment.

I preferred for my route the road through

Savoy; and in the course of the journey, after quitting France, I fell in with two Franciscan friars going to Turin, and we joined company. One of them was an old man, who had been invited to become superior of a monastery in the neighbourhood of that city, and was then on his way to take possession. Urged by the entreaties of that respectable ecclesiastic, and partly by my own reflections on the friendlessness of my condition, I was induced, after we reached the monastery, to assume the Franciscan habit, and to become a novice for several months, with the intention of professing myself a monk. But this design had scarcely been formed a week, when it began to be rumoured that Buonaparte intended to dissolve the monastic institutions of Italy. I, however, having been provided with the garb, continued to wear it.

One evening, as I was returning from Turin to the monastery, which stood at some

distance from the city, I fell in with a numerous party of soldiers who had been wounded in a recent battle. This, with some general news that I had collected in the town, furnished topics in the refectory for conversation after supper; and while we were speaking, a messenger came from a house, not far from the convent, to request the superior to visit an officer whose wounds had suddenly assumed such an appearance, owing to the fatigues of his day's march, that it was feared he could not recover. My friendly old companion readily obeyed the summons, and I went with him.

The night was solemnly tranquil,—the slightest sound was distinctly heard,—the lights of the city seemed to shine with more than common brilliancy, and the stars sparkled as it were with the intelligence of life as well as light.

On reaching the door, it was opened softly. A superfluous number of lamps and candles

were burning in almost every apartment, and an unusual splendour, but dull and mysterious, appeared throughout the whole house. The family spoke in whispers, and were answered by signs. It was evident that some catastrophe was going on.

We silently ascended the stairs. At the chamber-door of the dying man, a tall and venerable old lady stood listening;—she was wrapped in a white mantle over a dress black, and, the folds being loosely drawn over her head, it had the appearance of a winding-sheet, and gave to her withered and cadaverous features something wildly charnel and characteristic of the tomb. On seeing us approach, she raised her hand, and motioned us to go into the room.

On entering, we heard the patient breathing laboriously. His servant sat at a table near his pillow, with a crystal goblet of water in his hand. Observing us, he placed it on the table, and resigning his chair to the su-

perior; one of the domestics, who had followed us into the room, at the same time set down a lamp.

I took a seat at the bottom of the bed, and instinctively drew the capuchin of my habit over my head. The old friar, in the meantime, was gently addressing himself to the patient, who was suffering excessively, and breathing with great pain, urging him to make his peace with Heaven by confessing his sins.

"Heaven," exclaimed the officer, "already knows my sins, and I will not gratify your curiosity."

"You will permit me to pray for you?" said the superior.

"Do as you please,—but it is of no use."

The good and venerable ecclesiastic began in a soft, low, and pathetic voice, the orisons for the dying. Before he concluded, the dead-rattle was heard in the officer's throat. When the service was finished, the patient,

whose fortitude seemed to be invulnerable, requested a drink. I lifted the glass with the water from the table, at the same moment the old monk raised the lamp, and as we bent to administer the drink, I threw back my capuchin. The dying man gazed at me, and in that instant I discovered in him the mysterious son of the Corsican baron. He wildly stretched out his hand, and grasping the holy brother by the arm, cried, "Save me!" and expired.

Soon after that affair, the monasteries being dissolved, I threw aside my Franciscan garb, and went to Rome.

For the causes and reasons already described, I had seen nothing of that famous city during my first visit; I now saw every thing, and, among others, a curious collection of bones of the human leg, formed by a German doctor, for the purpose of instituting a new science, which he intended to call Skæliology.

He had arranged them in what he denominated moral classes, and showed me the points by which they indicated the characters of the individuals to which they had belonged. The signs of the passions were plausibly pointed out; and he showed, on a thigh-joint, what he described as a most extraordinary development of the index of delight.

I was in the act of taking the bone in my hand to examine it, when I was seized with the same inexplicable sort of tremor which I had experienced in Paris, at the time I first saw the Corsican officer in the coffee-room, and the image of the murderer Antonio flashed upon my recollection.

"This bone," said I to the German, "has been taken from a murderer's thigh. I knew the wretch, and his name was Antonio Scelerata."

The doctor gazed at me with wonder and dread, and then exclaimed, "How can you

know that? no one has before seen that bone. I bought the leg, and cleaned it myself; but it is unique, and I have not ventured to show it before, because I could not assign that conformation to any determinate class. But it is, as you say, the bone of an assassin who was executed for the murder of his master."

When I had satisfied my curiosity with all that was ancient and wonderful about Rome, I went to Leghorn, for the purpose of taking a passage to Corsica to see my friends, before espousing my fortune at Naples; but the vessel was captured by an English cruiser off Sicily, and carried to Malta, where I was set at liberty last week, being a Sardinian subject. Since then nothing particular has occurred to me; but I think, ladies and gentlemen, I have told you enough, to prove that the mind hath other avenues of intelligence besides the five vulgar senses; and those who doubt the fact, I ask to explain, in what consists the dif-

ference between the musician's ear and the painter's eye from the organs of sight and hearing in the eyes and ears of other men?

When the Sard had finished his story, and the applause which he had so deservedly won subsided, a debate arose between two Edinburgh lawyers, who chanced to be of the party, respecting the theories he had propounded. One of them was clearly of opinion, that the Sard had made out his case;—indeed so much so, that he could not imagine how any person possessed of common sense could deny the existence of the seven senses. The other was no less strenuous in maintaining, that none, but those who were destitute of that particular sense, would admit of any such thing. This controversy they continued so long and so virulently, to the discomfort of all around them, that it was unanimously resolved they should remove to a corner by themselves, and

abate the nuisance of their personalities. The one was a whig and the other a tory,—both highly respectable of their kind, and also as men, but each somewhat deficient in the sixth sense, upon which their argument so epigrammatically turned.

The two Scots, being thus for a time got rid of, were arguing, tooth and nail, as long as it was light, no one heeding them, till a sickish and peevish gentlewoman, under whose window they were vexing the silence of the night, discharged upon them, from a round-eared vessel, a shower of perfumes, not Arabian, by which she ended their debate, and obtained tranquillity.

In the meantime it had been agreed to defer the second drawing of the lottery till the following morning. Accordingly the different companies retired to their respective vessels and apartments; but immediately after breakfast next day they again assembled, and

some of them having taken courage from example, now voluntarily offered to begin the forenoon's entertainment. To this, however, Mr M'Havers, one of the Edinburgh gentlemen, objected, as contrary to the fundamental principles of their social compact,—he was the whig; but Mr Cram, the tory, upon the broad and general question, that every man was free to do as much good, in his own way, to the community to which he belonged as he had time, talent, and temper to perform, protested against that doctrine.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Mrs Sabre, for so the officer's lady was called,—she was no other than the celebrated daughter of Dr Pringle, of Legatee immortality,—"Ladies and gentlemen," said she, "while the professional gentlemen are settling their question, I would propose to allow the business of the community to take its natural course."

She was much cheered for this judicious

address; and an Italian player stepped forward, and offered himself to the attention of the company.

He was a lean, yellow-faced, black-haired, bushy-whiskered, hawk's-bill'd Adonis,—such as may be seen, by the half-score, in the pit of the London Opera-house during the season. He had rings on his fingers and in his ears; and he often made use of a snuff-appropriated bandana, the complexion of which was almost as bilious as his own. Never, indeed, was there a more striking instance of the necessity that we all should feel of putting up the poet's prayer—

"To see ourselves as others see us;"

for that same satire was on such perfect good terms with himself, that he plainly regarded Ego as one of the most captivating of the human race. To do him justice, however, he certainly seemed to possess a great deal of pleasantry and good humour, and he told his

story with cleverness and effect. Whether it was a fiction or a true romance, the means to determine are not accessible, but, nevertheless, it served its purpose; and if it does as much in the repetition here, it will not be the worst part of these volumes.

THE

IMPROVISATORÉ;

OR,

THE ITALIAN'S TALE.

WHITHER I was brought into this world by the usual human helps and means, or was a special creation, might admit of some controversy, as I have never known the name of parent or of kindred. All the presumptive evidence in favour of my being of Adam's family, rests on the singular circumstance of my childhood having been spent in the house of an excellent lady, Signora Delbosco, who, on account of her remarkable piety, was particularly honoured with the frequent visits of

Padre Urbano, a portly good-humoured monk of the Benedictine order. She was not, however, the only lady in the town whom the holy friars were in the practice of visiting, that was distinguished for a charitable care of little orphans, who, from time to time, made their appearance in the city no one could tell how.

The benevolent Signora Delbosco, much to the edification of all her neighbours, nourished me with the tenderness of a mother, and Padre Urbano treated me with as much affection as any father in the city could manifest for his own son.

When I had reached my fifth year, I was sent to school, where, in due time, I learned to read and write. The only circumstance that I distinctly remember of that epoch, is the person of my teacher. He had, like myself, some mysterious monkish origin, but was not so fortunate as to fall into the hands of so rich a protector as Signora Delbosco. At

the outset of life, he had been destined to assist in the making of men, as far as the garments are essentials; but having, in an early stage of his studies, pricked his thumb with a needle, the wound festered, and he was obliged to have the joint chopped off. By this accident he was disabled from clothing the naked at their own expense.

After the loss of his thumb-joint, the worthy Sticcinetto resolved to devote the remainder of his life to the improvement of the intellectual faculties of the human race, and accordingly, as soon as his hand was cured, he announced his intention to take up a school, and I, then at the prankful age of five, was enrolled in the number of his first crop of pupils.

Among other things associated in my mind with the remembrance of that blameless man, is an old clock which stood in the schoolroom, by which the ingress and egress of the boys were regulated. The hour-plate was

covered with a glass, which was broken at the corner, leaving a hole large enough to allow a quill to be inserted, by which the hands could be pushed forward. As the school-room was situated on the sunny side of the street, it was always opened some time before the master came, that the children might not play in the heat of the sun; and this afforded us daily opportunities of pushing the hands of the clock generally forward about a full half hour; and on each and every of these diurnal occasions, as soon as the master appeared, we set up a grievous lamentation for the time he had kept us, dutiful pupils, from our lessons. With a countenance beamingly benevolent, the simple-hearted Sticcinetto would look at the truant clock, and exclaim, "Lack-a-day, how time flies!"

When I had acquired all that this gentle pedagogue was deemed capable of teaching, I was placed under the charge of the Abbate Vicenzo. He was a very different sort of dig-

nitary. In his person sturdy, and in his temper testy, fond of good cheer, and prone to exercise the most unbounded despotism over his beardless subjects. I need not, therefore, say, that he was the constant topic of their ridicule, and his irascibility the butt of their malice, while a never-ending series of cabals and insurrections set at nought the pretensions of his imperial power.

Some time after I went to the abbate's school, he, one day before Lent, gave instructions to his housekeeper, a plump elderly matron, to prepare a savoury supper for three or four friends, equally distinguished with himself for a philosophical love of good living. The boys had heard something of the intended banquet, and resolved to disappoint the abbate and his cronies. For this purpose they made choice of me as one of their instruments.

Madam Parolles, the housekeeper, was a Frenchwoman, and, undoubtedly, possessed

great culinary skill. She was talkative and amusing, particularly in the fine descriptions which she delighted to give of the splendour of Paris, and the magnificence of Versailles. She was also a most erudite confectioner, and was often employed by the nobility to make sweetmeats and preserves for them.

Whatever doubts were afterwards entertained of my talent, I was confessedly born with a genius which delighted in the delicious scraps and crumbs of Madame Parolles' art. This often led me to attend her during the performance of her mysteries, enjoying her stories, and partaking of her sweets. The boys had observed this, and thought that I was so much a favourite with the good lady, no evil would be suspected of me, happen what would, in the plot which they had meditated against the banquettors. Accordingly, in order to secure my assistance, they constrained me, by many threats of implacable enmity, to take a part in their malicious

scheme, which was no less than to throw into the different messes which Madame Parolles intended for the feast, certain odious drugs.—To say the truth, I was at the time strongly tempted of the devil, and really did not stand so much in awe of the conspirators' menaces as I was delighted with the thought of having a finger in the pie.

At the proper time, I was, in consequence, duly in attendance on Madame, with pockets well filled with the different drugs; and as she kneaded her dough, and told her tales, I never laughed so heartily at her humour as when, from time to time, as often as she had occasion to turn round, I slily slipped into the paste, or among the meats, the detestable ingredients, with which I had been furnished by the conspirators.

At first all went well; the paste rose beautifully, and the ragouts, with the other savoury *et ceteras* of the supper, sent forth the most appetite-provoking fragrance, and Ma-

dame Parolles, from time to time, with uplifted hands of triumph, anticipated the most delightful commendations; with the flavour of but one dish, the soup, she was not however quite satisfied. It was not what she had expected; there was something unaccountable in the taste; she was in doubt if it would do; but, nevertheless, it was served up.

Among other spicy preparations was a particular pie, which she had seasoned with all her art, constructed with all her skill, and adorned with all her taste. It was, indeed, a *chef-d'œuvre;* but when it was brought out of the oven, the smell was intolerable. The very scullion declared that it stunk like the dead,—an expression which made Madame Parolles scream with horror.

When the first paroxysm of her distress had abated, the abbate was called, and informed of the accident. The ingredients of the pie were all, one by one, enumerated, and the cause of the odious flavour declared to be a

malignant miracle. There were, however, so many other good things prepared, that her master endured the disappointment with philosophical composure; indeed, it even afforded him a topic of amusement; for, on rejoining the guests, who were by this time assembled in the eating-room, he related to them what had happened, and many a peal of laughter announced how lightly they regarded their misfortune. But not to dwell on minor preliminaries, it is enough, that dish after dish was set before them, all of the most admirable appearance, but each of the most detestable taste. The soup alone had been deemed scarcely tolerable, and it was recalled to fill up the vacancy which had been reserved for other delicacies.

In the meantime, the conspirators, lurking round the house, had heard of the complete success of their machinations, and began to shout and crow with the most triumphant audacity. But in this hallooing before they

were out of the wood they showed the temerity of youth; for the abbate presently felt himself unwell, and in agony declared he was poisoned.

The servants flew to the magistrates; Madame Parolles fell into fits; the guests, too, began to groan with horrors, and to disperse themselves in every direction, as if Death pursued them into holes and corners, shaking his dart over them. The neighbours rushed into the house. Terror was in every countenance. I was smitten with guilty fears, and, escaping to the street, ran and concealed myself in one of Signora Delbosco's closets.

The police officers now entered the scene, and surrounded the house of the agonized abbate. The domestics were taken into custody. Madame Parolles was seized in the midst of her distraction, and dragged away, wringing her hands, her ringlets streaming in the wind. Search was made for me. The officers came to Signora Delbosco's,—all as

pale with horror of the crime, as men of their habits are on such occasions; having rumaged the house from top to bottom, they found my hiding-place, and pulled me from the lurking-hole more dead than alive.

I shall not describe the alarm of the kind signora; and no father could be more afflicted than was Padre Urbano on being informed of the suspicion that attached to me, especially when, on my knees imploring mercy, I confessed what I had done, and was taken with my accomplices, in threes and pairs, and lodged in prison.

In the course of the night, however, the bowels of the abbate and his friends began to compose themselves; towards morning the patients enjoyed a comfortable sleep; and about the time when I was carried with my companions before the magistrates, they were all charmingly well again, and clearer in the complexion; so that, instead of the dreadful murder, which had filled the whole city with

consternation, the school-boy trick was discovered, and the affair became a source of inextinguishable laughter. But as to receiving any of the offenders back to his seminary, the Abbate Vicenzo declared that would as soon consent to harbour as many Moorish infidels or English heretics; for my part I no less lustily protested, that I would never again set my foot within his door.

All this occasioned great uneasiness and sorrow to the pious Signora Delbosco and the portly Padre Urbano. After many parental consultations, they agreed to send me to Venice, where the friar had a brother, an eminent merchant, who would, no doubt, do all in his power to promote my future welfare. Accordingly, in the course of a week, I was sent off under the care of Carlina, the nurse and confidential servant of the signora.

In the course of our journey a dreadful thunder-storm obliged us to take shelter for

the night at a miserable inn on the road-side. The same cause constrained also other travellers to do the same thing; and as there was only one chamber in the house, the whole assemblage had no choice but to pig together. The chaste sensibility of old Carlina was prodigiously disturbed at the idea of this, and she considered herself undone, till the hostess fortunately recollected that the carriage in which we had come might be converted into a safe and snug bedchamber.

As soon, therefore, after supper as possible, Carlina withdrew from the crowd to the carriage. I went in first, and Carlina, having private matters to discuss with the landlady, lingered some time behind in the house. The continual flashing of the lightning, and the distant peals of the retiring thunder, frightened me so much, when left alone in the carriage, that I returned into the chamber where the other guests were preparing themselves to sleep, and sat down among

them: being fatigued with travelling, I was soon embraced by Morpheus on the floor.

Meanwhile a great dog, belonging to one of the travellers, seeing the carriage-door open, thought, like the hostess, that there were worse bedchambers in Italy than a carriage, and he accordingly jumped in, and occupied my place. Soon after, Carlina, and her gossip the hostess, went to the carriage, and the former inquiring for me, the dog answered with a groan.—"Poor thing," said Carlina, "he is already fast asleep, I will not disturb him;" and with that she hoisted herself in. A few minutes after, it seems, she fell asleep; but the dog was not so comfortable. The flashes of the lightning and the hurling of the thunder kept him awake, and made him press closer and closer to the venerable Carlina. The occasional transient disturbance of her repose, which this affection occasioned, made her vaguely mistake him for me, and she hugged him with those ob-

scure feelings of kindness with which in her sleep she was wont to press me to her bosom. This attention met with a proper return from her companion, and he began to lick her hands, and to aspire to her face, in which attempt he roused her from her slumber. Finding herself so prematurely, as she thought, in the arms of the old gentleman, she screamed with such vehemence, that the dog, scarcely less terrified, bolted out at the window.

Her cries called forth all in the house, and every one came running to her aid. For some time she was unable to speak, and when she did recover her senses sufficiently to make herself understood, she declared that the devil had not only flown away with me, but had taken the most improper liberties with her.

Saving this adventure, we met with nothing else worth describing. The following evening, after a pleasant sail down the Brenta, we reached Venice, where my reception by Signor Argento, the brother of Padre Urbano,

was as kind as any nephew could reasonably expect from an uncle; and Carlina was consoled in his house for the fatigues and disasters of the journey by a judicious administration of a delicious cordial which his housekeeper had herself prepared.

In the course of the second year of my residence in Venice, I began to feel that the vegetable period of life was over with me, and that I was ripening into manhood, when a restless spirit takes possession of the heart, and a love of change deranges all that parents and guardians have previously concerted. During the carnival, I went, with other youths of my own age, to the shows at the different theatres; and in one of the most insignificant, a little piece, which obtained the applause of the populace, was brought out. I forget entirely the subject of the play, but it was pleasing, tender, and romantic; and the principal female part was sustained by Patetica, a young actress of considerable ce-

lebrity. She was a fine stage-figure, and her countenance exhibited the most expressive beauty and intelligence. I thought her divine, and was smitten to the heart; nor was my passion without reason, for it is impossible to conceive any thing more ravishingly affecting than her impassioned accents, or so irresistible as the imploring pathos of her eyes. All the scene to me was absorbed in that elegant creature;—I saw nothing but her beauty,—I heard but only her voice. When I returned home, I could think but of Patetica;—she floated in my dreams invested with the radiance of a goddess, and when I awoke, it was only to remember some delightful accent of her eloquence, or some glances of the beautiful spirit that resided in her eyes. Night after night I went to the theatre;—all the fiction of the performance vanished, and she appeared to me the heroine that she only personated.

The first effect of this passion was an at-

tempt to embody my feelings in a sonnet. The ass can bray as tunefully as my muse; but I thought it worthy of the divine Patetica, and enclosed a copy, subscribed with my name and address. The lovely object of my sighs and adoration replied to me in a note filled with the most complimentary commendations, and she concluded with informing me of the night appointed for her benefit, to which she requested my patronage. This turned my head,—I bought as many tickets as my pocket-money would allow,—I sold them among my acquaintance, and again bought more, and thus filled the house with all the sprucest beardless clerks in Venice.

At the conclusion of the play I went behind the scenes, confident in the greatness of the patronage I had procured for Patetica. I had never yet, by any accident, seen her off the stage, and the stage, in my young enthusiasm, had hitherto seemed the focus of

all that was magnificent in art and sublime in nature; but when I beheld the heroes and heroines,—the tattered, haggard, patched, and painted progeny of Thespis, as far in appearance below the children of daylight as the despicable daubing of their scenery was inferior to the landscapes of nature,—I was seized with a strange qualm of disgust;—I looked around among the hideous gang, but could see nothing of the divine Patetica; at last, after some time, I discovered an ugly, wide-eyed, coarse trull, on very familiar terms with the bill-sticker of the establishment, for the brute was pawing her cheek. In this hideous fury I at last discovered my goddess. Had I been plunged into a mixture of every odious taste and smell that the apothecary can compound with the aid of all his gallipots, the sensation would have been pleasant compared to what I suffered at that discovery.

I was thus cured of my first love, and I

should have left the spot with aversion, but for a lively little brunette, who was so confoundedly stupid on the stage that no one could endure her. Behind the scenes she was Venus herself, compared with the hideous Electo that I had found in Patetica.

The deficiencies of Belletta, as an actress, had the effect of drawing out her other talents to please; and the moment she cast her eyes on me all her allurements were spread. It happened that this damsel had not performed in the play, and among the first things I said to her, was an inquiry as to the cause.

"I am," replied Belletta, "the victim of a faction. Alas! signor, jealousy is the ruin of my talents. I shall never, never be permitted to assume a part worthy of my genius!"

"Who is your rival?" said I, touched with pity. "Who is it that opposes your just pretensions to fame?"

"That wretch," exclaimed the gentle fair, "that ugly, staring wretch, Patetica; and the creature is very well known to be,——" she added, with a captivating smile, "what I am only suspected to have been."

I could not, I must confess, see very clearly in what manner the circumstance of Patetica having made a faux-pas could affect the merits of Belletta as an actress; but she said it had; and she looked at me with such languishing eyes, that I could not but believe it true. In a word, before we had conversed many minutes, she took me by the arm with the ease of an old acquaintance, and I was soon persuaded that the amiable Belletta was one of the worst-used actresses in the world; and as I had exerted myself in behalf of Patetica, I resolved to redouble my endeavours for the beautiful "victim of a faction;" but when I attempted to interest my companions in her favour, assuring them that she was truly a most incomparable

actress, I became myself almost a victim to their ribaldry and ridicule. Belletta, however, consoled me. But Argento, hearing of the affair, wrote to Padre Urbano, who immediately came to Venice, and remonstrated with me for having formed a connexion so imprudent. All he said, however, would have proved but thin air, had not an Englishman come the same night to the theatre, and seeing Belletta, supplanted me in her affections. When her landlady told me the fact, I verily believe that I could have laid violent hands on Belletta, and shaken the beautiful eyes out of her head. To mend the matter, Padre Urbano somehow heard of her infidelity, and rallied me without mercy. Being a man of some humour, and possessed of the most consummate knowledge of the world, his ridicule was at once so cruel and so just, that, while it made me quiver with agony in every nerve, I could scarcely refrain from joining in the laugh.

But his mirthful compassion was little to what I suffered, when all the hopeful youths of my acquaintance came to afflict me with their condolence. I often wonder that I did not drown myself in the Adriatic. However, I weathered the storm, but the event left a deep impression. It changed, as it were, my very nature, and without any thing like what can be called the corruption of dissolute companions, I became one of the most dissipated lads in all Venice.

Padre Urbano had returned to Padua soon after my adventure, and had left me, together with much good advice, a considerable sum of money. With all his knowledge of the general character of mankind, the sapient Padre was not, however, aware of the force of individual peculiarities. His advice I gave to the four winds of heaven, and his money became as paws to my vices, and every pleasure was for a time within my grasp. Not that I was naturally disposed to

be a libertine; on the contrary, I fancy that, if my affections had been interwoven with those domestic ties, which are reciprocally formed among children of the same family, I should not have abandoned myself to such profligate courses. I say this, because in that career of dissipation I was often most miserable. Ennui preyed upon me in the morning; and to get rid of her I threw myself into the arms of Debauchery. I was terrified by the upbraidings of that pure spirit within the bosom, whose decisive sense of our actions makes almost all the difference between the good and the bad.

Argento considered my entire ruin as inevitable, and again requested the presence of his brother. The worthy monk instantly obeyed the summons; and he was so much shocked by my altered appearance at our first interview, that he could scarcely refrain from shedding tears. He declared that I had the audacious look of a youth fated to

an evil end, and yet the frank gladness with which I had rushed into his arms convinced him that my heart was not entirely corrupted.

When the first emotions of his affections had subsided, he assailed me with reproaches, and exerted all the powers of his strong natural eloquence to lower my pride. I needed not his terrible sarcasms. There was an echo to all he said within me, whose deep and dreadful responses were far more appalling than the scorn and contempt of man. It was the voice of my guardian angel, as he struggled with the sensual fiend for mastery. I fancy, in the contest, however, that the devil got the better of the angel; for, after the monk had given vent to his indignation and grief, I began to think I had done nothing very wicked for my years, and said to myself, "To be sure I am a little wild, so are most clever lads; but, upon the whole, I am honourable and generous." But I am

obliged to confess, now that I reflect on it, not one act of kindness nor of charity was performed by me in all that unworthy career.

By this time I was become intimately acquainted with many of the players, and was generally esteemed among them as a shrewd buck. I could say happy things; I had a knack at mimicry; could sing delightfully, especially comic and jovial airs. What was of quite as much consequence, I was, for my age, a well-built, handsome fellow.

On some occasion or another, a series of grand fetes were at this time to be given at Florence; and rumour of the intended festival produced a great sensation on the dramatic body at Venice. The first performers received liberal engagements; the inferior went on speculation, and I went with them.

It happened that, in the boat in which I embarked with my friends for the *terra firma*, was the manager of a principal thea-

tre, and a large miscellaneous assemblage of kings and harlequins, princes and fiddlers, singers and candle-snuffers, and all those other living *et cetera* of characters that make up the pride, pomp, and circumstance of histrionic splendour. We were a jovial crew; the laugh, the jibe, the joke, went merrily round; and ever and anon some choice spirit favoured the company with a specimen of his art. At last it fell to my lot to sing, and I acquitted myself so well that the Great Man, the manager, expressed himself astonished. But I will not waste time with trifles. He made me a liberal offer to perform with his company at the Grand Duke's theatre,—and I considered my fortune made.

I had, however, never studied a part; but Signor Aliatico was so confident in the effect of my powers, that, without reference to what the rest of the company might think, he determined that I should make my appearance in a principal character. In the

course of the journey I acquired the speeches and practised the airs: before we reached Florence I was at home in my part.

I had not, however, counted on the awfulness of a first appearance on the stage; and as we drew nearer and nearer to the city, strange feelings came over my heart. It was remarked that I lost my hilarity, and grew pale and pensive. The manager suspected the cause, and did all in his power to cheer me; the other players maliciously magnified my hazards. At last we arrived, and my arrival was announced to the ducal court with a great fanfarrado. It was publicly announced that I was a prodigy, and that Signor Aliatico, the manager, had the greatest merit in persuading me to come with him; that I was such a capricious devil, no dependence could be placed on me; and that I would only play and sing when it pleased myself; in short, every device was tried to stimulate the curiosity of the public, and to anticipate

the consequences of my embarrassment and want of practice and of science. The result was complete success; the whole court and city talked of nothing but my whims and talents—the ladies were as loud as possible about my fine person—the Grand Duke himself was as much interested in the success of my *debut*, as if the glory and prosperity of his dukedom were at stake.

In the meanwhile, it seemed to me as if time was rushing forward with unusual speed. I looked at the sun in the morning, and before I knew where he was it was noon; and down he fell from the meridian to the evening, as if he had tumbled headlong from his car. I felt the whole earth moving. I looked around, and every thing was going onward. The moon sprang from her couch in the cloud, as if she had been bowled along the sky. The stars were rash and rushing, and a sound was in my spirit and in my ear, more terrible than ever mortal heard.

At the appointed hour the manager came to conduct me to the theatre; he described the vast crowd assembled for admittance, and spoke in raptures of the splendour of the house. The tidings were to me more tremendous than thunder; my limbs trembled and my lips quivered. I declared myself unwell. I protested my inability to perform. My memory was gone, my voice extinct. I felt that I could not survive the trial. But the manager heartened me into courage, and forced me to go with him.

When I entered the theatre, I saw no distinct object, nor heard any intelligible sound: lights and eyes, and faces and furniture, floated before me; and voices and violins, and ten thousand discords, pealed in my ears.

While I was in this state the curtain drew up, and the manager, who stood near me behind the scenes, absolutely pushed me into the middle of the stage before the audience. A vast continued rousing applause gave me

time to recover my breath, and my part beginning with a song not inapplicable to the tremours with which I was so shaken, when the din of my reception subsided, I was able to commence with some effect. I never sang worse; but the audience were all in raptures. My defects were attributed to my caprice, and every body was resolved to applaud me into good humour.

As the scene proceeded I became more at ease; my spirits began to recover their wonted briskness, and the loud and long plaudits that crowned my every effort added new energy to my powers. Never was any *debutant* more successful; but I was certainly not a good actor; for, instead of performing the character which the author had conceived, I threw into it my own peculiarities. This, however, made me sufficiently spirited and natural, and tongues and hands were alike vehement in my praise.

Night after night the opera was repeated,

and every night I was more and more at my ease, and of course better and better. Assuredly, had I died at the close of the fetes at Florence, I should have been recorded as the most extraordinary Roscius of modern times. Perhaps, had I studied with care, I might have risen to eminence both as a singer and an actor; but my appearance in a new part at Leghorn, to which the players removed after the festival, dispelled the illusion that had procured so many caresses and so much renown. The actors discovered that I had no histrionic power.

Among others to whom I was indebted for many attentions at Leghorn, was the Marquis Cantabile, a nobleman of the finest genius. He invited me to his parties, chided my indiscretions with paternal solicitude, and took every opportunity to persuade me that, notwithstanding my voice and figure, my talents were not well adapted to the stage. "The quickness of your fancy," said he, "the live-

liness of your conceptions, and the innate felicity of your language, convince me, that you are rather destined to excel as a poet;" and he urged me to make an essay in verse. I obeyed him, and produced an allegorical rhapsody of the grossest nonsense about Spring and Cupid. I thought it a masterpiece; and when I presented it to the marquis, he smiled at my haste; but as he read, I observed that he grew serious. "This will never do," he at last exclaimed; "it is arrant trash; take it away; when you have bestowed more pains, I will then read your verses."

Piqued and mortified, I abandoned the muses, and never looked near the marquis. When he invited me to his house, I was always engaged. About a month after, however, a young man, belonging to the theatre, offered the manager a little piece of his own composition, in which he had introduced the part of an Improvisatoré, which he designed for me. The dialogue was neatly written,

and the situations chosen with that sort of dramatic skill which is only to be acquired by a constant attendance at the playhouse; the poetry, however, which he had provided for the Improvisatoré, was execrable.

On reading my part, the idea struck me, that I could perhaps produce a better effect were I, instead of reciting what was set down for me, to attempt extemporaneous composition in the different scenes. Filled with this notion, I paid more attention than was common with me to my part; and I said nothing to the other players of my intention; for I had noted the crooked working of their envy.

The house, as is usual on the first representation of a new piece, was crowded to the ceiling; and, among others, my friend, the marquis, was in his box. The first essay of the Improvisatoré, in the drama, required that he should display his abilities to convince a whimsical old man that he was indeed

gifted with genius. Nothing could be more happily imagined for me. I looked towards the marquis as I entered on the stage; I felt the inspiration of the muse descend upon me; was lifted out of myself, and began a rhapsody, which I addressed to the marquis, and in which I indignantly adverted to the contempt he had expressed at my fine strains about Cupid and the Spring. Images thickened upon me; the rock was touched by the prophetic wand, and the stream began to flow. My spirit mounted, and, in the fervour of its flights, I became so entranced in the topic I had undertaken, that I lost all sense of the scene before me, and continued to vindicate my poetical talents with such a glorious consciousness of power and abundance, that the actors on the stage stood amazed at what they heard, and the audience sat in silent admiration and unbreathing astonishment.

At the close of the scene, the marquis came behind the scenes, and, enchanted with de-

light, called me a second Homer. From that time I was known by no other name.

The piece consisted of two acts, and it was in the first that I produced such mighty effects. In the second I had a still more difficult task. By the structure of the piece, the Improvisatoré was a lover; and although he had won the father of his mistress to approve his suit, he had yet to convince her of his constancy, his ardour, and his love.

During the performance of the first act, I had observed, in one of the boxes, a beautiful young lady; and when I came to the scene in which I was to woo, I turned with all my enthusiasm towards that lovely stranger. It was supposed in the theatre, that I had already exhausted my vein, and the audience was disposed to allow the play to be curtailed on my account—so well had I performed the first act. But I felt in myself no diminution of ability, and returned to the stage with a confident mind and a proud

step. The other players proceeded with their written parts, and the moment of my trial came. The whole house was hushed as I paused to collect my thoughts. Every eye was quickened, as I moved round the stage to the side where the beautiful Rosalia sat. The business of the scene required that I should address an actress, who by this movement was left behind me; but, instead of turning round to her, I knelt and addressed myself to Rosalia. I will not describe what ensued: she became an involuntary performer in the scene; for my first words directed every eye towards her. She shrank from the general gaze; she blushed as I proceeded; she grew pale as I implored her pity; and, forgetful of all the public around her, when I described my fondness, sincerity, and devotion to her for ever, she melted into tears, and stretched her arm towards me, conjuring me to rise. A universal shout resounded from all parts of the theatre. The spectators started from

their seats, and the actress to whom I ought to have addressed myself ran towards me, and overwhelmed me with caresses.

But the effect of my poetry did not terminate with the fiction of the scene. The beautiful Rosalia was kindled with love; a fervent and generous passion took possession of her heart, and in contempt of the difference of our rank, for she was of noble birth, she would have bestowed on me her hand. She was, in truth, all that the bosom of man could desire. Her person was adorned with every charm of youthful grace and beauty, and her mind, naturally of a lofty bearing, was enriched by the skill of the ablest teachers. With greater variety of knowledge than the sex usually enjoy, she possessed a lovely simplicity of character, at once so open and delightful, that I have never met with any woman so perfectly calculated to rivet the affections of the man whom she had once interested in her favour. But, alas! I must confess my

total unworthiness of the love which I had inspired. I was as insensible to her beauty as a painter or sculptor; I could only admire the piece of work which nature had made in her. In fact, I was at the time over head and ears in love with the Parisian *fille de chambre* to the wife of the French ambassador to the papal court, who had arrived from Marseilles a few days before. She lodged with her lady in a hotel opposite to the house in which I resided; and, about an hour before going to perform at the opera, we had exchanged, across the street, reciprocal glances of the purest affection.

On the morning after the performance, as I was standing at the window, all eye for the gay Parisian, whom I momentarily expected to appear, an old woman was admitted into my room; she was the nurse of Rosalia. She began to sob, and wipe her dry eyes, and heighho, with all the airs that old sinners on such occasions commonly practise. She had

come from her mistress, to request me to meet her in the evening. All this was flattering to my vanity; but the little piquant French girl occupied my whole heart. However, I promised to attend, and the old go-between departed; but before the appointed hour, the French girl had contrived to afford me an interview, and I never thought any more on the noble Rosalia.

Among the audience of the preceding night was one Masano, a printer; a bustling money-making fellow he was. The applause with which my efforts were crowned suggested to him the idea, that if I would write out my rhapsodies, he might make a good penny by publishing them; and, accordingly, he made me a proposal, liberal enough I must allow; but the whole strain of what I had recited was no more. I could not recollect two entire verses, nor bring two rhymes to clink, and on every repetition of the part my strains were in consequence different.

In the meantime, Masano had gone round to all his friends to tell them of the bargain he had made with me. He had struck the iron while it was hot, and all his friends were charmed with the thought of obtaining my magnificent sallies in a tangible form; a vast number of copies were ordered; all the town began to talk of the business, and Masano was praised to the skies for his decision and liberality. The days of Ariosto and of Tasso were come again, and even a poetical lover more impassioned than Petrarca.

In vain did I endeavour to recall the fugitive images of my raptures; they were gone for ever, and I gave up the task in despair. About the end of a week, Masano called on me for a portion of the copy, that he might set his compositors to work. He might as well have called at midnight on the clouds for the sunshine with which they had been illuminated in the evening. I could give him nothing—he stood like a statue of amazement

before me—not a very handsome one, I assure you—for he was a little fat man, with a singularly round face, his eyes very small and sharp, his cheeks as plump as plums, and his short snub nose more like a pimple, than that conspicuous ornament of the human face divine.

When he had recovered his breath, he exclaimed, "and can you do nothing for me?"

"Nothing," I replied, "literally nothing."

At these words his astonishment changed into rage, and he flew upon me like a tiger in earnest, and seized me by the collar, crying, "I will not believe it—it is a lie—you have cheated me—you have sold yourself to some other rascal—I will have the verses—I will have the poetry!"

At this crisis, Padre Urbano entered my room. My elopement from Venice had afflicted both him and Signora Delbosco exeedingly; and when they at last heard of my appearance on the stage, he came immediately

from Padua to reclaim me, if possible, to a more honourable way of life. A few words explained to him the cause of Masano's passion; and being a man, as I have already told you, of a facetious disposition, he endeavoured, before saying any thing to me, to pacify the frantic publisher. But it is needless to repeat all that passed before the bristled back of the little printer was smoothed down, or his temper coaxed into a manageable state; nor shall I trouble you much with what afterwards passed between the worthy monk and myself.

"I see," said he in the end, "that it is useless to contend with innate character. Nature has implanted in thee a roving disposition, and bestowed on thee those sort of talents which are the best fortune that can be given to one of thy kind. I will not urge thee to return with me. Go wheresoever thou wilt, but let me hear sometimes from thee. When thou art prosperous and happy, I shall

guess the fact by thy silence, but when thou art in distress, let me know, and I will try to help thee. I should have been glad, had it been possible for thee to have remained quietly under the maternal wing of Signora Delbosco. But the bird sees its feathered young depart from the nest for ever, and cheers them in their flight with songs, and I know not why the human being should feel differently. Go, and be happy, I do not say be prosperous; but if thou canst keep thy heart free from guile, thine own temper will make thee jocund, happen what may to thy fortunes. I know enough of thy character to be convinced that thou art not at all fitted for any kind of regular business. Pleasure is the nymph to whose care Destiny has consigned thee; but take care, in the pranks she plays with thee, that thou art not betrayed to associate with Guilt. Go, and take with thee this purse and my blessing."

Albeit, unused to the melting mood, there

was something so kind and touching in this address, that I could not refrain from shedding tears on the hands of Padre Urbano; he, also, was a good deal moved; but from that conversation, although he treated me with friendship, he never appeared to take any particular interest in my conduct.

From Leghorn I went to Messina. My first course, on my arrival there, was to wait on the manager of the opera, who received me with joyful eyes and friendly hands. The same evening it was announced from the stage, that the renowned Improvisatoré, surnamed Omero, had arrived from Leghorn, and was engaged to perform, for a limited number of nights, some of his most celebrated parts. The devil a part had I suitable to me as an Improvisatoré, but the one in the little piece already described. It was, however, determined, that all the wits of the theatre should be laid under contribution, and, in consequence, a new drama was composed,

founded on the story of Orpheus. In the contrivance and management of the fable, the playwrights certainly showed some skill. Night after night I played the part of the Thracian bard with sublime effect, and favours from all ranks were showered upon me.

But it was not my fate to be able to turn the advantages of my situation to any profit. In this spring time of fortune, when every bough around me was covered with blossom, the air filled with melody, the heavens clear, the sun bright, and the sea smooth, and all around gladness, and promise, and pleasure, I was seized with an insatiable desire to play the flute. I did nothing all the livelong day but exert my breath to produce discords, and while I ought to have been charming the beasts and birds with my rhapsodies, as Orpheus, I could only think of my flute. It was soon, in consequence, observed, that I grew careless in my part; and one night I

acted so ill, that a burst of displeasure arose from the whole house, and withered me at once into insignificance. I fled from the stage in terror, ran to my lodgings, and, like a child pursued by some imaginary phantom, I hid myself in a closet, and endeavoured as it were to believe myself in a dream.

In this state I continued about an hour; when I had become a little composed, my flute-mania was cured, and I was in as sane and sound a mind as any reasonable philosopher could expect. Let doctors, if they can, explain this. But the same night I hired a letica for Palermo, and before morning I had crossed the mountains. During the first three days of my journey I did nothing but vent maledictions on the Messinese. As I approached Cefalu my sullenness, however, began to subside.

That city stands on the sea-shore, at the foot of a stupendous promontory, where hoary cliffs and dreadful precipices lift into

the clouds the walls and towers of an extensive castle of unknown antiquity. The town itself, as you approach it from Messina, lies hid behind the shoulder of the mountain. The road towards it is a cornice, as the Sicilians ingeniously call the paths which wind along the edge of precipices; and the footing of my mules not having my entire confidence, I alighted from the letica, and walked on alone.

The mortification I had received at Messina still embittered my reflections, and I was in no humour at the moment to trifle with the soft caressing airs with which Nature seemed, as it were, to woo me to be cheerful. But, on leaving the letica, and looking on the landscape around me,—the lofty castle standing darkly on high like the genius of the warlike ages; the spacious blue sea exceeding the whole expanse of vision, studded with the Lipari islets, which served as stepping-stones to the Fancy in her excursions beyond the

visible horizon; the rugged mountains towering above me on the one hand, and the rich cultivation, which adorned their sloping sides, on the other, below me; with the cheerful sounds of labour ended, which, in a fine evening, rise so musical from the environs of a Sicilian town, combined, with the mingled ingredients of a benevolent genie's spell, to dissipate my grief and melancholy.

I had not walked far, when the reverie, into which I had been lulled, became warmed into sentiment and expression, and, the muse descending upon me, I carolled, as I went along, a spontaneous hymn to Nature, in which I gave full scope to all the varieties of my voice and the prodigality of my imagination. In this enchanted humour I had walked for some time undisturbed. But, on turning round the corner of a jutting rock, a little boy, who had come from a garden above the road, met me, and begged me to go with him to his father.

"We were enjoying ourselves," said he, "in the pavilion when we heard you pass, and my father has sent me to request the favour of your company."

There was flattery in the invitation, and I accompanied the boy to the pavilion. It was a small, rude, open, temple, constructed on a projecting rock over the precipice, along which the cornice-road was formed, and it commanded a superb view of the whole coast.

The party, assembled in this fit cage for a poet, consisted of an elderly gentleman, with a sedate look and a military air; his wife, a lady somewhat less advanced in years; a lively girl of sixteen, their niece; and two little boys, their sons, of whom the eldest had been the messenger of their hospitality.

On my appearing, the Baron advanced to meet me, and said, in a polite manner,—

"We have been so much charmed by your singing, that we have presumed to bribe you

for another song, by the offer of our house for the night. I perceive that you are a stranger; and so few strangers pass this way, that you are not likely to be well accommodated in the town. I, therefore, hope you will accept our offer; we shall be repaid by your company, even should you not favour the ladies with a song."

I accepted the invitation with pleasure, and a servant was immediately despatched to conduct the letica to the villa of the Baron, a small, but tasteful building, which stood about half a furlong from the pavilion.

After a short preliminary conversation, the Baroness inquired, as I had mentioned my having come from Messina, if I had heard Omero. The question disconcerted me a little at first; I hesitated for a moment; but at last, mustering all my virtue, I told her that I was myself the identical person. Delighted with this, the whole party seemed disposed to treat me as if I had been Apollo

come among them; in a short time I was not only perfectly myself again, but inspired with the muse to rapture. I sang them a eulogy on the pleasures of a country life, and, contrasting it with those of the town, I introduced a description of the misery of a gentle mind compelled to have recourse to the stage as a profession,—a thing, by the bye, extremely improbable; but they gave me credit for having depicted my own feelings. The fair Agatha, the niece, shed tears of sympathy and love.

The Baron, however, was a man of the world; he had served several campaigns in the army of Maria Theresa, and knew too much of mankind to give more credit to my poetry than was due to a well-conceived fiction. He applauded my talent, but he also regretted, in a polite admonitory manner, that the power of expressing noble sentiments was often of little advantage to the possessor, and that the works of the greatest

authors rarely afforded any view of the motives and principles by which their own conduct as men was actuated. He had, in fact, noticed the tears of the lovely Agatha, and had perhaps divined, from the cast of my physiognomy, that I was not altogether so innocent and pastoral as my shepherd-like verses were calculated to make her believe. I felt a little hurt by his observation; but that frank spirit which inhabited my bosom, and which all the vicissitudes of my chequered fortunes could never dislodge, approved his prudence, and compelled me to respect the man.

The sun had by this time retired behind the hills, and the dew began to fall so heavily, that the Baron proposed we should adjourn to the villa, and there spend the interval till supper-time, when he expected some of the officers, with their families, from the castle.

"We hold to-night," said he, "a little festival, and it is singularly fortunate that we

can introduce to our guests the Omero of the age." In saying these words, as the path was narrow, he desired the children to walk on before, and the ladies to follow, while he took me by the arm. I was sensible that he held me back until they had advanced a considerable distance before us, but I could not divine his motive; at last he broke silence.

"I perceive, young man," said he, "that you have been long enough in the world to think lightly of many great offences. Your countenance tells me so, and your address convinces me; but you have just sentiments, and I dare say can feel honourably."

What could I say to so true and so decisive a speech? I was confused; but at no loss to guess the drift of the Baron's remark. It was clear that he was afraid of his niece; and, in truth, from what I could see in the course of the evening, his apprehensions were well-founded. But I was on honour. How

long this virtuous firmness might have continued I shall not undertake to say; give me, however, as much credit for it as you can.

As the company arrived, the scene grew more and more interesting; and the lovely languishing Agatha had soon a rival in a little round and cherry-cheeked lady, the wife of an old major in the garrison. This sturdy beauty played off on me, when I sang of love and a lover's hopes and fears, all the artillery of her smirks. Her husband was a tall, meagre, erect, and stiff personage, with a prodigious long queue down his back. In one of my recitations, I perceived that he eyed his little lady with orbs that flamed with dreadful thoughts; and the imp of mirth tempted me to sing to her as a lover. The lady was silly enough to encourage me with a thousand smiles, till the major, unable to withstand her folly, rushed behind her, and with an oath that split the ceiling, tugged

her by the hair with such fury, that his execrations were lost in her screams.

The Baron, who had noticed the whole scene, took me aside in the confusion. "I am sorry," said he, "to observe that you are not able to perform the part I expected of you. There is some gold for you, and my servants will assist you to remove your baggage to the city, where, I regret to say, you must find lodgings."

I cannot imagine how other men would have felt on being treated so contemptuously, but the lesson I had received at Messina came flashing in all its terrors upon my recollection, and I shrunk from the Baron like a poltroon;—I did not, however, take his paltry gold.

On descending from the villa to the city, I learnt from the servants that the major's little lady was in truth no better than one of the wicked, and that he himself was such a resentful cur, that I would do well to take my-

self from Cefalu as soon as possible. I needed no spur to that intent. By the dawn of day I was again in my letica, the mules trudging briskly, and their bells ringing cheerily, as they conveyed me towards the capital, which I reached the same evening.

Next morning I waited on the manager of the opera, and announced myself; but, widely as I had dreamed my fame was spread, he pretended that he had never heard of me. This was a greater damper to my vanity than even the indignation of the Messinese at my carelessness. I felt, however, confidence in my genius, and requested that he would afford me an opportunity of appearing before the Palermitans. He heard me civilly, and begged me to sing one of my airs, that he might judge of my voice and accomplishments. Now this was trying my strength in its weakest part. I had, it is true, by this time, acquired a passable knowledge of mu-

sic, but I had nothing like proper professional facility. The manager was profoundly skilled in the art,—it was his pride to be so; and although his company were, in point of voice, not remarkable, yet the performance at his theatre was the most accurate and the best managed in all Europe; so that I had not proceeded above half-a-dozen bars in a song, when he exclaimed—"This will not do;—you have an exquisite voice, but the gifts of nature have been cast away by your negligence. It would take three years of close study to fit you to appear in my theatre, and even at the end of that time, I doubt if you would rank higher than a singer of the third class."

This was a severe cut. I was prepared for nothing like this; but I so far mastered my feelings as to say, that I did not consider singing as my forte;—that I was an Improvisatoré, and in that capacity had frequently

obtained the approbation of the most distinguished critics.—" Who are they?" said the manager drily; " what are their names?"

This was worse than his condemnation of my singing. I could name no one in the instant;—my face flushed with mingled radiations of anger and shame;—he saw my agitation, and observed, with the most ineffable self-complacency—

" I see how it is, sir; a few foolish persons, whose little stock of experience and knowledge in such matters is circumscribed to some petty circle, have good-humouredly said they thought you a genius, and, on the faith of this opinion, they have sent you here with the idea of making a distinguished appearance on the metropolitan boards. Take my advice, signor, and return to some industrious vocation better adapted to your talents."

Although good nature is the vice of my character, this insolence was a little too much, and in my turn I became the assailant.—

"By what superiority of nature or of education," I exclaimed, "are you so well qualified to pronounce a sentence on me so final, and without appeal?—I should very much suspect that all your art is artifice;—I have seen enough of players and managers, to know that their best ability lies in gulling the public; and I shall not be surprised when I go to hear your performers, to find them a parcel of ignorant knaves, well drilled by a scoundrel to impose on the simplicity of the Palermitans; and that all this pretended science of yours is a trick, that only requires to be exposed in order to be punished."

These taunts I uttered with a scornful tongue, but a smiling countenance. The manager was thunderstruck, and grew as pale as ashes.—"Good morning, sir," I added, "good morning. I see you have lost your temper, and I am losing my time."

Never had spell or invocation of wizard such an effect;—he gazed upon me as upon

an apparition, and saw me depart with just such a look as a bereft man would glance towards a vanishing spectre.

From the manager of the Opera I went to the potentate of the Comic Theatre. I described to him the interview I have just related; and I mentioned, with a confidence inspired at once by his own good humour and by resentment for the indignity I had suffered, the success with which I had appeared on different occasions as an Improvisatoré. But what could he do with an Improvisatoré, his performances being limited to regular tragedy and comedy?—He was, however, a man experienced in shifts and expedients, and, after ruminating for a few minutes, he said—

"Well, you shall perform at my house. I will get a little piece prepared on purpose for you;—I have in my company an excellent mimic;—he will study the character of the opera-manager, and you will perform together. This will afford scope for all your

talents. The scene between you shall be drawn from what passed with the manager;—the Palermitans will find themselves appealed to as judges, and you will be crowned with immortality."

I was pleased with the idea, and we immediately sat down and constructed a little plot. It was very simple;—merely a young artist, desirous of an engagement, and giving specimens of his powers to the manager. On the same evening it was announced from the stage, that Signor Bellavoce, on his way from Venice to London, would, out of friendship to the manager, perform for a night or two in one of his most popular and perfect parts. There was no such performer as Bellavoce engaged for London; but the manager assumed that there might be such a one, and if there was not, it was not his fault. However, the stratagem was successful. The house on the night appointed was filled with the best company in Palermo, to the no small

loss and discomfort of the opera-manager;—he had no idea that the actor announced could be me;—perhaps he suspected some trick, for, being in correspondence with all the principal musicians in Europe, he could not but have heard of Bellavoce, had any such performer existed.

The curtain drew up,—the piece began, and in due season I appeared. I was then in the bloom of manhood, and dressed in my best;—I was flatteringly welcomed;—and, in making my bow for this reception, I caught the eye of the opera-manager in the pit, and fascinated him with such a look, that it led all eyes towards him. This was enough;—in the course of a few seconds his representative, the mimic, dressed and painted exactly like him, came on the stage, and the joke was instantly relished by the whole house. The dialogue commenced,—thunders of applause and cataracts of laughter proclaimed that the satire was understood. My spirits

revived,—I never sang better. My fancy became fertile beyond description, and my triumph was complete. The opera-manager quitted the theatre in despair; and my repetition of the part became so popular, that his house was entirely deserted.

But, gratifying as in every respect my victory was, I felt conscious that it could not last long. The solid attainments, and the exquisite taste of the opera-manager, I was convinced, would soon recover their ascendency, and I resolved to make hay while the sun shone. Accordingly, notwithstanding all the voluptuous temptations of Palermo, I availed myself of the pretended engagement for London, and announced my intention to take my leave on the evening of my own benefit. This was the only prudent act of my whole life, and, like most prudent actions, it was attended with great success. The company overflowed,—the presents sent to me were liberal beyond all precedent,—and I took

leave of the audience with unaffected sorrow.

Having embarked for Marseilles, I was safely landed in France after a short and pleasant passage. It was my intention to have proceeded directly for Paris, of which I had heard so much from Madame Parolles, and from every other Frenchwoman and Frenchman that I afterwards met with;—but not being able to speak a syllable of the language,—for I did not then take snuff,—I stopped at Marseilles till I could procure a servant to act as my interpreter. I still retained the name of Bellavoce; and the people belonging to the vessel in which I came spoke of me as a prodigy.

It happened, that at the hotel where I took up my abode, an agent of the London Opera-house was then waiting for a favourable wind to transport him to Leghorn, on his way to Naples for the purpose of engaging performers. He was as little acquainted with Ita-

lian as I was with French; but he had a shrewd knave of a servant, a Neapolitan, who acted as his interpeter.

This agent of the English opera had in his day been a cabinet-maker, and possessed about as much taste in Italian music as his own bidets. Having learnt that he was in quest of a principal male-singer, I sent for his interpreter, and told him, that I would make him a handsome present if he could give his master an inclination to engage me; and it was arranged between us, that I should make occasional bravura flourishes in walking backwards and forwards in my chamber, which was near the Englishman's, and that the cunning Carlo should as often take an opportunity of repeating a thousand fine things of the wonderful Bellevoce.

Thus, to make a long tale short, I was in the end engaged to be first singer in the London Opera-house; and the Englishman, who had no more idea of our music than he

had of that of the spheres, was infinitely delighted with my flights and flourishes, and those other absurdities which the chaste taste of the Palermitan manager had pronounced so execrable. He accordingly wrote to his principals, that in Signor Bellavoce he had found the most incomparable singer and performer then in all Italy ; and that I possessed, in addition to the extraordinary powers and capacities of the richest voice, one of the finest persons on the stage.

His letter was shown to all the musical professors and persons of taste in London, and mutual congratulations on so great an acquisition were exchanged in all quarters. The only circumstance which led them to suspect the veracity of the description, was his account of my person, to which, as singers both male and female are in general surprisingly ugly, they could not give credit. However, it was rumoured through all the fashionable circles, that *The Bellavoce* was to be

brought out; and those ladies and gentlemen, the subscribers to the opera, who, in their simplicity, inquired if it was a serious or a comic piece, were informed that it was the name only of the most accomplished singer in all Italy. The bait thus took in London, and when I arrived there all the world was agape.

It was late in the evening when I reached the British capital, and I sent immediately, on my arrival, to apprise the manager, who came flying to me on tiptoe, and with expanded arms. Jaded and fatigued as I was after my journey, he insisted on dragging me with him to a concert, in the mansion of a magnificent and beautiful duchess. Nothing could exceed the *eclat* of my reception. The apartments were mean and small, compared to those in the palaces of the nobility in Italy and Sicily; but they were crowded to suffocation with all the great of the greatest nation.

The performers in the concert acquitted

themselves so respectably, that I began to fear I had overrated the musical ignorance of the English, and also my own impudence. But the airs they sung were in a different taste from ours; and I was comforted when I heard the best of them attempt a popular Italian song. Toward the end of the concert, the lady of the banquet came to me, and begged me for the love of God to sing one verse. It would oblige her so much; it would make her famous for ever, to have it said that I had first sung in England in her house. There was no withstanding this; and, besides, she was a beautiful and fascinating creature.

The manager, who acted as interpreter between us, pleaded my fatigue in excuse, but without effect; for she so continued to implore and beseech me with a couple of the loveliest blue eyes, that I could not resist; and I sang accordingly one of my gayest songs, one which I reserved for jolly parties

behind the scenes; but the English knew nothing of Italian, and I was applauded to the skies.—What taste! What sentiment! O, divine! Bravo! echoed from all sides. The duchess was transported into the third heavens; and the little manager was scarcely less in ecstacy.

The King's Theatre, on the Saturday following, was crowded with such an audience as was never before seen; legs and arms were broken in the crowd, and some four or five score of lives lost. The king's first minister got his head so jammed at the door, that, had it not possessed an enviable solidity, it must have been squeezed as flat as a pancake. But, for all that, the audience were in raptures of joy when I made my appearance; every song I sung was encored; and such, as it was reported in the newspapers, was my astonishing execution, that the orchestra could not follow me. This, I believe, was literally true; for I was continually running out of tune. It

diverts me yet, when I think of the Londoners and their Italian opera. An old dowager, whom age had rendered as deaf as a post, and whose box was in the remotest part of the house, assured me that I was the only singer she could endure to hear since the days of Faranelli; I was perhaps, indeed, the only one that bellowed loud enough to make myself heard in the uttermost corners of that vast theatre.

In London I made a great deal of money, and enjoyed every pleasure that the heart of man could desire. But I could neither like the country nor the people, and I resolved, after the end of the second month of my engagement, to return to Paris, where I should find a public more congenial to my taste.

It was late in the evening when I entered the coach that was to carry me from London; and, on taking my seat, I found several other passengers already seated. I was not long

among them when I discovered that two of them, a lady and gentleman, were Italians. There was something in the voice of the woman, (for it was so dark we could not see each other's faces,) that affected me very strangely. I thought it was familiar to my ear; and at last I was convinced it was the voice of the faithless Belletta. This discovery induced me to remain concealed, in order that I might ascertain in what state and circumstances she then was; and I soon collected, from what passed between her and my countryman, that, after gathering a rich harvest from her English friend, she was returning home to Italy; and that her companion, who had been valet to her protector, was on such good terms with her, that as soon as they reached a catholic country, it was their intention to be united in the holy bands of wedlock, and to set themselves down comfortably in Belletta's native village on the banks of the Brenta, where, as she observed, they would

get a family of pretty little children, and be so happy, till it was time for them to go to heaven.

When the lovers had adjusted their future scheme of life, their conversation took a more desultory character; and as the first thing in the minds of all professional people, whether heroes or actors, is their profession, it naturally related, on the part of Beletta, to the English theatres, which she pronounced quite detestable. "What would you think," said she to her swain, "that when I went to Drury-Lane, an old lady was exceedingly polite to me, and invited me to her house; but she wanted to make me a heretic. And pray, who do you think this Bellavoce is, that all the world is mad about? He was my lover when your master came to Venice. Poor soul! I shall never forget how he looked when he saw me with my lord: I am ready to die of laughter when I think o't. Ah! he

was as innocent as a lamb; I had a great mind to pay him a visit when I saw him in the opera; but my lord was then negotiating his marriage with Lady Sophia, and I promised to be faithful to him till all was arranged; so honour forbade me from seeing my dear—I forget now what he was called."

Upon this declaration I made myself known, and excessive was the joy and the gratulation on the occasion. We travelled to Paris, and lived all together as happily as possible for about six weeks. In passing, however, from Marseilles to Genoa, we were captured and carried into Malta, where I have left Belletta and her caro, having seen them married, and partaken of their wedding-feast on the evening prior to my departure. To be sure it was a sad damper to our mirth on the occasion, that the plague was raging in the town; but, you know, it would never do, the world

might as well indeed come to its end at once, were people to refrain from marrying merely because others were dying around them.

No sooner had this narration concluded, and the company satisfied themselves with scrutinizing the baboonish-looking visage of the Italian, who had passed through such a multitude of adventures, wherein it was difficult to determine whether the world, or rather the play-going world, had been "more sinned against or sinning," than an old man, with a black silk Geneva cap, quite visible under the ample beaver which he indulged himself in, withdrew his meershaum from his lip, and, spitting on the floor under covert of his left hand, declared his readiness to afford, if in his power, a share in the entertainment.

All eyes were eagerly turned upon him; but the Italian, perfectly aware that nothing

could come up to a comparison with his own inimitable adventures, folded his hands on his breast, and commenced humming, in a tone audible enough to express contempt, or something like it.

The old Gottingen Illuminatus "looked, but heeded not." He was too sturdy a plant to be blown away by a breath like a pile of thistle-down; so, after staring through his ebony-bound spectacles with a tremendously arched eyebrow at the Italian for a moment, he turned the back of his chair half round upon him, observing to the company—"I see you are all eager to hear something from me. Concerning myself I have nothing wonderful to entertain you with, but will leave you to guess whether the following be fact or fiction."

There was a murmur of approbation, which drowned the humming of the poor Italian, and old Gottingen proceeded.

THE

GERMAN'S TALE.

At the birth of every man, a certain star is appointed to preside, and he who is able to discover the particular orb of his own destiny, may learn, by the changes in its appearance and splendour, whenever his good or evil genius acquires the predominant influence.

Few, however, have been able to obtain this important knowledge; but tradition says, that Count Herman of Flaughtenburg, who was nephew to the celebrated Prince Palatine Aadolph in the reign of Henry the Birder, not only possessed it in an eminent degree, but also the secrets of alchymy and magic. The singular things which he was able to per-

form are the admiration of all the students of the occult sciences; and the history of his own life, as tending to illustrate the peculiar astrology to which I have alluded, as well as to explain in some degree the prodigies ascribed to his faculties in philosophy, is one of the most curious legends in the history of knowledge, and has served as the basis of many wild and wonderful poems and dramas.

In early life the Palatine, his uncle, had been deeply in love with the beautiful Matild, the youngest daughter of Count Albert of Strasburg; she, however, placed her affections on Rupert of Hemlin, a youth of noble blood, but whose patrimony had been wasted in the Hungarian wars, by which he was rendered entirely dependent on the generosity of his friend the Palatine. It is commonly said, that Rupert had not acted in the business with all the purity due to his generous patron; on the contrary, that, being em-

ployed by the prince as the messenger between him and Matild, he had himself become smitten by her beauty, and used, for his own advantage, that free intercourse to which he was admitted with the lady only on the Palatine's account. But, however this may be, the Palatine, on discovering the mutual passion between Matild and his faithless friend, did every thing to promote their union;. and at their marriage he advanced large sums to Rupert, for which he took his bonds.

The perfidy of Rupert, or the disappointment, certainly sank deep into the high chevalier bosom of the Palatine; for he soon after quitted the Birder's court, and retired to the castle of Flaughtenburg, where he spent the remainder of his days sequestered from the world.

In due time Rupert and Matild had a son, whom they named Gondibert, who became the friend of Herman, as his father had been

to the Palatine, and, strange to say, treated him, as it is alleged, much in the same manner; for Herman, falling in love with Beatrice of Lunenburg, Gondibert supplanted him in her affections, and they were married.

The effect of this on Herman was similar to what the conduct of Rupert and Matild had been on his uncle. He, too, quitted the world, but, instead of retiring to the country, and taking his pastime in the chase, he went to Nuremberg, and, entering himself a member of the college, devoted his days and nights to the study of that strange and mysterious erudition for which he became so greatlv renowned.

When he had been about seven years engaged in these solitary studies and occult researches, he happened one afternoon to walk out into the forest on the northern side of the city, and, just at the moment of sunset, he observed a stranger near him. He was some-

what startled by the suddenness of his appearance; for the stranger had come upon him like an instantaneous apparition, and his garb and air were strange and alien. He had a singularly ancient look, and it is supposed by many that he could be no other than the excommunicated Jew, who is doomed to wander over the earth till the day of judgment.

After a solemn and silent salutation, this tremendous person offered to Herman a large old magical volume, curiously bound and ornamented, and locked by seven brazen clasps of the most extraordinary workmanship. Eight times Count Herman refused to accept the mysterious volume. It would have been well for him had he withstood the ninth temptation, but his firmness yielded; and that night, though the sky was cloudless, and every planet and orb of the heavens shone out with unusual brilliancy, the natal star of Herman was not visible.

The instant that he took the book, that

strange and ancient man vanished, and the Count returned with it to his chambers in the college. It was observed, by some of the priests in the city and the doctors of the university, under his arm, as he walked homeward; and they were all struck with wonder and curiosity at the sight, for the most learned among them had never seen any volume so richly and so hieroglyphically adorned.

For seven days and nights Count Herman did nothing but study that volume,—and with the window of his apartment open, in order that he might see the star which he had previously ascertained presided over his destiny. As often as he turned a new leaf, the rays of the star were observed to flicker and twinkle with an ominous and fatal intimation, but still he persevered.

On the evening of the seventh day, he had completed his perusal of the volume; and, without speaking to any one, he walked to

the church-yard, and gathered certain herbs; he afterwards went to an apothecary, and bought other ingredients; but what use he meant them for the apothecary could not divine. Having thus collected his materials, he procured a large copper vessel, in the centre of which he lighted a fire, and threw in the ingredients which he had previously collected.

By this time it was almost midnight, and his star had contracted its lustre into the smallest possible speck. The Count still seemed to hesitate as he approached a table, on which lay a case of lancets that he had provided, and as often as he paused, reluctant to lift the instruments, the beautiful star brightened its admonitory radiance, and cheered him to desist. But his evil genius in the end prevailed;—stretching forth his hand rashly, he took one of the lancets, and, piercing his left arm, allowed three drops of his own blood to mingle with the other ingredients of the caldron.

Scarcely had he with a throbbing heart performed this dreadful incident of sorcery, when a vast, lean, and dreadful hand appeared amidst the smoke and fume of the charm, and presented him with a roll, on which was written these words:—"If thou wilt yield thy soul to me, unless it can be redeemed by the prayers of those you injure, I will serve thy wishes with the power of a god and the submission of a slave till All-souls' eve."

"Who and what art thou," exclaimed Count Herman, "that dost tempt me with this apocalypse of agency?—Show me thy face, that I may know if thou mayest be trusted."

At that instant a black cloud, which was hovering in the air opposite the window, and which had obscured Count Herman's star of destiny, suddenly opened, and displayed a magnificent being, clothed in light and splendour, and smiling with ineffable and alluring sweet-

ness and beneficence. The Count, ravished with delight at this beautiful revelation, fell on his knees, and declared, that he had no desire to serve any brighter God; but still retaining some of his wonted self-possession, he said—"Show me, however, what thou canst do for me, for I will accept nothing on trust."—In that instant the vision disappeared, the cloud rolled itself together, and in a moment after it was moved aside by the wind, and Count Herman saw in another cloud behind it a shadowy procession of slaves bearing loads of treasure, and golden urns, and gems of the richest lustre.—"No," said the Count; "if thou canst give only wealth, I will not accept the conditions of thy offer; for gold can but minister to the sensual wishes of the corporeal being, and my spirit thirsts for higher pleasures."

Scarcely had he uttered these words when a change came over the vision, and he beheld in the cloud a vast landscape delineated as in

the scene of a theatre. In the midst of it was a superb city crowned with domes and spires; and presently a great army was seen approaching, in the commander of which he beheld a figure of himself. As it approached the city the gates were thrown open, and a number of venerable senators were seen to come forth, bearing the glittering regalia of an ancient monarchy, which they presented, kneeling at the feet of the phantom-resemblance of the Count.

"No," exclaimed Count Herman; "I am not to be bribed by the toys and baubles of ambition. You would but place me in the sunshine, on a far-seen pinnacle, to make my ruin more impressive than the disasters which befall the common fortunes of mankind. Away, ye empty pageants, ye vain illusions, that the slavish mind alone worships! I have not given my days and nights to the magnanimous spirit of antiquity, to be fooled by such trinkets."

In the same moment the scene again chang-

ed, and the picture in the cloud represented a dark forest, partially illuminated by gleams of lightning, which showed a form like the figure of Sir Gondibert.

"Ha!" cried the Count, "you would surrender him to my power! No, spirit, no; I am not to be tempted by offering me the indulgence of so mean a passion as malice."

In that instant the view of the forest, and the phantom, and the storm disappeared, and in its stead the beautiful Beatrice was seen in all her charms asleep on a voluptuous couch.

"Canst thou give her?" exclaimed the enraptured Herman, in a fatal moment. "O, let me possess her, and I am thine!"

At these words a dreadful peal of thunder shook the skies; the whole heavens were overwhelmed with tempest and horror; and Count Herman, distracted by the fearful compact he had made, rushed into the open air.

The alarm into which the college was

thrown by the sudden storm may easily be conceived; and it would be a vain attempt of me to describe the agitation of the learned professors, flying half-naked in all directions, and the confusion into which many amiable students were thrown by the sudden discovery of the sort of inmates they had taken into their rooms for the night. All these and other particulars it would only be a waste of time to describe; but from that night Count Herman became morose and melancholy. His studies were abandoned, and he gave himself up to the most gloomy and moody abstraction.

In the meantime, Sir Gondibert and the Lady Beatrice were enjoying every felicity of the married state. Their affection had been blessed with several children, with whom they were annually in the practice of celebrating the return of their wedding-day by a little rural fête, at which all their neighbours, and the peasantry around their residence, were in

the practice of attending. On the return of this joyous anniversary, while they were in the midst of their festival, Count Herman was seen to issue from the recesses of a wood, with his arms folded, and countenance knotted with the evidences of fierce and troubled thoughts. Sir Gondibert, on seeing him, was touched with sorrow at his altered appearance, and sent two of the children to invite him to partake of their revels. At first the Count was shocked and agitated, to find himself led thus unaware to witness the happiness of his rival; but the kind and innocent entreaties of the little children won upon his affections, and he allowed them to lead him by the hand to their parents.

For a few minutes the appearance of the gloomy misanthrope damped the general hilarity of the company; but the impression soon wore off, and they resumed their dancing with even more spirit. But their cheerfulness found no responsive sympathy in the

breast of Count Herman; on the contrary, it awakened all the worst feelings of his nature, and he hastily quitted his seat between Sir Gondibert and Beatrice, and rushed into the forest, calling for the demon. What passed between them is not known; but scarcely had he disappeared among the trees, when a dreadful wild boar came furiously out of the wood, and carried off one of the dancers, to the total destruction of all the happiness and pleasure of the day.

From that time, as if afraid to trust himself abroad in the world, the Count retired to his paternal castle of Ruggensburg, where he lived for some time a solitary and wretched life, musing with remorse on the rash act by which he had forfeited his soul without being able to avail himself of the purchase-price. In all that time his natal star was not visible in the heavens; and night after night he walked the lonely battlements of his towers, with his eyes eagerly fixed on the constellation

to which it belonged; but it never shone out.

One night, as he was thus contemplating, with a settled horror, the countenance of the skies, so totally darkened to him, he was heard to exclaim,—"The loss of Beatrice was perdition to me, and the rage of passion, like the blasts of hell, overwhelmed me with inexpressible despair. O, Beatrice, what a forfeit I have made for thee, and yet I have not courage to demand of the fiend to make thee mine!" and at these words he cried with a shrill and terrible voice, to which all the midnight echoes resounded awfully, as it reverberated among the hills around the castle, "Come, thou accursed demon, and fulfil the purpose for which I am pledged to be thine. I will have Beatrice in my castle a willing guest; find the means to bring this to pass."

At these words a dismal and ominous black cloud, like a pall, covered the face of the heavens,

and the fiend was seen to approach it, sailing slowly along with dreadful wings. In a moment it stooped, and lifting the blackness like a curtain, exposed behind a stately bedchamber, in which, on a couch, lay the phantom of a venerable old man, seemingly in the last stage of life, presenting a number of papers to one of the numerous attendants who surrounded his couch. Count Herman was struck with astonishment at this visionary scene; for in it he recognised a chamber in the castle of his uncle, the Palatine; and in the person of the invalid, a wasted sickly apparition of that illustrious prince; but before he could inquire what it meant, the fiend suddenly armed himself with a dart, and struck the dying man dead. The whole scene then disappeared, and in the same moment an express arrived in the castle from the Palatine, to inform the Count that he lay at the point of death, and was desirous to see him before he died.

Count Herman, overawed and trembling when he heard this, immediately set out for the residence of the Palatine; but, before he had performed half the journey, he was met by Sir Ludolph, his uncle's secretary, who was coming to inform him that the Palatine was no more.

"Where are the papers that he gave you?" cried the Count abruptly. The attendants, and particularly Ludolph, were surprised at the question; but the latter only bowed, and taking a parcel of papers from his bosom, presented them to the Count. "There," said he, "are the papers which he gave me to deliver into your own hands. They are the bonds and vouchers of heavy debts due by Sir Gondibert on his father's account."

At these words Count Herman snatched them eagerly from the hands of Ludolph, and seemed, as it were, to devour them with his eyes.

The faithful secretary was evidently much moved at this avidity, and said—

"Your uncle, my late gracious master, charged me in the most solemn manner to request you never to claim payment of these debts; for the debtor was once his dearest friend, and he would long ago have destroyed the bonds; but knowing how similarly treated you had been by his son, Sir Gondibert, he still preserved them, in order that you might show the greatness of your mind by giving them up even to the man who had injured you, and so, like the Palatine himself, do good for evil."

But to this Count Herman said dryly,—"All that Sir Gondibert possesses is not sufficient to satisfy these words."

"Nor twice as much," replied Ludolph.

"Then he is ruined."

"He must be so, were you, my lord, to insist on payment."

"The man is in my power," exclaimed the Count, with hoarse and horrible exultation. "Go, slave, and at thy peril remit no means

the utmost rigour of the law allows, 'till Sir Gondibert has paid every fraction of this debt."

Sir Ludolph would have remonstrated, but the Count was inexorable, and, in consequence, Sir Gondibert, with his family, was reduced to the extremest distress. By these circumstances, the command which had been given to the fiend was fulfilled, and the Lady Beatrice, in great sorrow, came to the gate of the Count's castle, and sought admission.

While she was standing in conversation with the porter, the Count happened to come out, and seeing who was there, ran and attempted to embrace her; but Sir Gondibert, who had attended her thither, and who at the moment stood concealed behind a tree, on hearing her cries, rushed to her assistance, and rescued her from the arms of the ravisher.

The rage of Count Herman, in being thus disappointed, knew no bounds; he stamped on the earth, and summoning the demon, up-

braided it for keeping the word of promise to the ear and breaking it to the sense. "I will not believe," he cried, "that thou canst perform half the bargain, unless you instantly show me that you can move Mount Rosenberg from its seat."

At that moment the fiend grinned hideously at him, and starting at once up into terrible stature, seemed to fill the whole space between the earth and the heavens, and crushed the mountain into sand beneath his heel: in the same moment a tremendous earthquake was felt throughout the country. The Count was horror-struck, and perceived that he was indeed in the power of a mighty and incomprehensible being; nevertheless, his native energy still supported him, and he said to the fiend, "I am satisfied; go and bring Sir Gondibert to me." At these words the fiend vanished, and the Count retired into the castle, where, taking his seat at the window of his study, which overlooked the magnifi-

cent valley of the Rhine, he leant upon his hand, and tears of sorrow fell from his eyes, when he beheld the sun setting in all his glory beyond the hills.

In this state he continued for several hours, to all appearance wholly occupied with sorrowful meditations, when suddenly he happened to look up, and was startled to observe his natal star, whose beautiful silver eye had been so long shut, beaming brightly and beneficently upon him. In the same moment, Sir Gondibert opened the door of the apartment; and when the Count looked round to see who was entering, the star contracted its radiance, and seemed again extinguished.

On seeing his victim approach, the Count became agitated by the worst passions, and, in the madness of rage and revenge, exclaimed, "Would that I had a knife!" In the same moment, an awful figure, muffled in a black mantle, glided past him, and stretching forth a skeleton-hand, presented him with a

dagger, with which he instantly rushed on Sir Gondibert.

"Hold, Count Herman!" cried the unfortunate knight, "I have no weapon to defend myself. Though the promise and generosity of your youth be blasted, still, oh! surely you are not so fallen from all goodness as to strike me like an assassin?"

"Blood for blood!" was the hoarse and convulsive reply; "I have shed mine for thine."

"I do not understand you, you speak in riddles," said Sir Gondibert, with the self-possession and bravery of a gentleman when in danger. "But if you will take my life, it must be yours, for I am defenceless."

"Prepare yourself then," cried the frantic Count, "you have not long to live. Kneel and implore the mercy of Heaven. In that, Gondibert, you are the happier man, for I must never again kneel in supplication to Heaven."

"What do you mean, Herman? what hideous mystery is in your words?"

"Down on your knees—trouble me no more—I give you leave to pray."

At these words, Sir Gondibert looked compassionately on the demoniac, and, kneeling with reverence, lifted his hands and eyes, and said—

"Not for myself, but for this guilty and miserable man, to whose everlasting sorrow I must thus die, do I implore the mercy of Heaven."

During this short apostrophe, the Count made several efforts to strike his victim with the knife, and as often as he raised or dropped his arm in hesitation, the star contracted or expanded its splendour. At last the better humanity of his nature conquered, and, flinging away the dagger, he fell on the neck of his friend, and wept bitterly; while the beautiful star broke forth with such universal radiance, that the whole Alpine scene around

the castle was brightened as with the dawn of a new day.

In the morning, the domestics in the castle were delighted to find their master in some degree calm, and restored to his ease of mind and gentle manners. Nor could Ludolph believe his delighted eyes, when he saw him conduct Sir Gondibert to the castle gate, where he shook hands with him kindly as he said, "Go and bring her to me—I am now myself again—and we shall taste of happiness; her virtues and yours have conquered." And with these words they parted; but scarcely had Sir Gondibert disappeared from the portal, when the Count suddenly relapsed into his gloomy mood, and hasting back into his chamber, summoned Ludolph.

"Have you those accursed bonds?" he exclaimed the moment the old man entered the room.

Ludolph replied, with a melancholy and beseeching look, in the affirmative.

" Then destroy them, my friend; fly, destroy them; my time draws to an end, and I may be in the interval tempted to some horrible act; fly and destroy the bonds."

Ludolph hastily quitted the apartment; and in the same instant the Count summoned the demon. " Come once again to me, dreadful phantom—wilt thou not come, slave? —for, till my time is run, the bargain was to serve me." At these words the demon slowly and sullenly appeared.

" Go," cried the Count, " and find me the means to repair the ill and evil I have done."

The demon paused. " Thou shalt go," exclaimed the Count with vengeance; " I command thee by the bargain in which I sold myself."

The demon seemed to glare and gnash its teeth as it reluctantly withdrew. But scarcely had it vanished, when certain officers of the church entered, and seizing the Count as

a sorcerer, carried him off to prison; for by this time the rumour was spread far and wide, that he had acquired the mysterious powers of magic, and employed unblest means for the worst of purposes. But the innate greatness of Count Herman's spirit preserved him with a noble bearing, even before the inquisitorial tribunal.

"It has been stated to us, Count," said the Grand Inquisitor to him, "that you have made the dreadful purchase of the book of accursed secrets from the wandering Jew."

To this Count Herman made no reply.

"To the rack with him," cried the indignant inquisitors.

"Hold! keep off!" exclaimed the Count to the officers, as they advanced to drag him to the wheel. "If you torture me, I may, in the distraction of the agony, accuse you, my Lord Inquisitor, of being a party with me in the alleged crime."

The tribunal was astonished at this bold speech, and each looked at the other some time in silence.

"He is not to be daunted by the rack," said the Grand Inquisitor; "we must try him by some other test. Look, Count Herman, the late earthquake has rent and almost ruined this abbey,—will you rebuild it?"

The Count smiled in scorn, and readily promised. He was then told, that he was free to depart; after which, the tribunal was dissolved, and all went away, save only an old and venerable monk, called Benedict, who stopped and looked in compassion on the Count, as he stood with a wild air, for some time apparently unconscious of being observed: at last the Count, seeing the monk surveying him with interest and pity, went towards him, and took him by the hand.

"Holy father," said he, "there is a disease that philosophy cannot explain, in which it is said that a fire kindles of itself within

the living frame of man; I have caught it, and it burns here;" and he wildly smote his forehead, adding, "Oh! till I felt this pain, I knew not the virtue of the boon which nature has given. Surely despair is but a deadly malady, and when instinct prompts the self-murderer's hand, it is but the course which the demon takes to work out its natural issue."

"Alas! my lord, these are frightful thoughts. Know you not where they must all go who commit the inexpiable sin?"

"Wherever it may be, they carry their fate with them, and they cannot suffer a fiercer hell than burns within their earthly bosom." In saying these words the Count paused, and taking the monk by the hand, added, "I have learnt a terrible secret by the stern scrutiny of my unsocial studies!"

"What is it?" inquired the friar, with a quick and alarmed accent.

"It is—those who commit suicide, but fulfil

a compact which they had previously made with the eternal adversary," replied the Count, with a firm and solemn voice; his eye however was wild, and his cheek pale.

"My lord! my lord!" cried the monk, shuddering, as the Count turned hastily away, and looking back, said—

"Holy father, this is All-souls' eve, and when you hear at midnight"—

"What, my dear lord?"

"You may hear nothing—perhaps thunder,—or the cry of a wretch sinking into the earth. But, holy father, fall on your knees and weep. To pray then would be of no avail."

"Of what do you speak?" cried the monk, almost incapable of utterance.

"Nothing, nothing," replied the Count; "I am an egotist; I think but of myself. Good night."

The Count then left the chapter-house of the abbey, where this scene had taken place,

and the old friar stood for some time agitated with fear and sorrow, not well knowing what to make of the perturbation and incoherency of the Count.

In the meantime a stranger had arrived at the Birder's court, and represented to the emperor that a tremendous boar ravaged the skirts of the forest, and that his strength was so appalling that all the boldest dogs and horses in the surrounding country bolted from the chase, and would not approach him. The emperor, being one of the bravest hunters of the time, on hearing this news, forthwith resolved to hunt this terrible boar, and gave immediate orders for the court to attend him by break of day next morning. Accordingly, at that time, with the whole of his nobles and courtiers, the Birder took his way to the forest, where they had scarcely winded their horns, when the growl of the boar was heard like the deep lugubrious voice of an earthquake. The dogs instantly fled,

cowering under the horses, which, no less terrified, snorted and trembled, and at last bounded away, in spite of the spur and rein of their riders. The emperor was soon left alone; and, finding himself astray in the mazes of the forest, allowed Windfoot, his favourite horse, to carry him as he might, for the terrified animal was not to be controlled.

After riding at full speed for some time, Windfoot stopped panting at the bottom of a precipice, and the emperor, on looking up, saw the walls and towers of Count Herman's castle, and immediately rode round to the gate, which he reached just as the Count returned from the tribunal. The Birder, with his wonted courtesy, saluted him, and, briefly relating the adventure of the day, said that he must, for that night, be his guest. The Count required no explanation of the cause which had brought the emperor to his gate, but, preserving his self-posses-

sion, he ordered the warder to summon the household, while he conducted his imperial master to the hall, where he presented Beatrice and Sir Gondibert, whom he found there, with their children, anxiously awaiting the result of his own arrest. Having done this he then retired to his study, and invoking his demon-slave again, commanded it to provide a suitable banquet for the emperor, and to contrive the means of collecting all the scattered nobles and courtiers in the castle. This was scarcely said, when, in a moment after, the sound of a buglehorn, like that of the Birder's, was heard echoing in all directions in the woods and valleys around the castle; and presently after the nobles and courtiers, with their jaded dogs and horses, were seen advancing towards the foot of the rock on which the castle stood. Thus, before sunset, was the whole of the imperial court convened within Count Herman's walls; and a banquet was served up, which, even the

servants who had prepared it, could not believe was the work of their own hands. His imperial majesty was infinitely delighted; and, at the request of the Count, honoured Sir Gondibert with many graces of his imperial favour before he retired for the night.

During the whole of the banquet Herman was, however, moody and gay by fits; and when the court left the hall, and none remained with him but Sir Gondibert and Beatrice, he seized them wildly by the hands, for it was then almost midnight.

"O hold me, hold me!" he exclaimed. "Time drags me on. Upon my forehead I feel the coming demon's fiery breath. O give me air! Open the windows, and let the living freshness of the breath of Heaven assuage this burning!"

Sir Gondibert and Beatrice were exceedingly distressed at witnessing this new paroxysm, as they deemed it, of his madness;

but they led him to the window, which they opened.

"See, my lord," said the Lady Beatrice, as she unclosed the casement, "the beautiful starry sky. It is the wing with which Providence covers the sleeping world, all speckled over with bright eyes that ever watch."

"I see there but the restless orbs of time," replied the Count. "How they hasten onward! They are, methinks, the harbingers of some terrible executioner, that will himself soon appear. Why is this universal haste?— Stand still, ye rash and rushing planets. While there is time I will call the fiend, and bid him stop them, that the doom-hour may never come."

But at that moment the bell was struck; a cloud, like the smoke of a rising conflagration, overspread the firmament, and low and distant thunders, that pealed louder and louder, rattled over the castle. The Count had,

at the sound of the bell, dropped the hands of his friends, and, wrapping himself up in his mantle, stood before the open window sublimely awaiting his fate. In the course of a short time, the awful form of the demon was seen dimly in the darkness gradually dilating as it approached. Sir Gondibert and Beatrice fell on their knees, exclaiming to Heaven, "O, as we have pardoned him the wrongs that he did to us, let him be forgiven for what he has done against Providence, and let the arm of his good angel be strengthened to drive away the fiend!"

At these words, a stupendous and glorious arm was seen to issue, as it were, from out the immediate region of the star, and touching the head of the demon, crushed it into the earth. Instantly a shout of all the gay birds and creatures of the daylight was heard; and the natal planet of Count Herman was seen like the morning star. From that time he lived a redeemed and happy man; but never

did he afterwards enter his study, save only once, and then he destroyed all his books and crucibles, considering the knowledge which they contained only calculated to bring the souls of philosophers into the jeopardy of everlasting perdition.

THE END.

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